

# NVMMEN

## INTERNATIONAL REVIEW FOR THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

*EDITED ON BEHALF OF THE*

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE  
HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

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**VOLUME XXXI**



LEIDEN  
E. J. BRILL  
1984

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## ASPIRATION COLLECTIVE ET EXPERIENCE INDIVIDUELLE DANS LA BHAKTI SHIVAÏTE DE L'INDE DU SUD

CARL-A. KELLER

Entre le VI<sup>e</sup> et le VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle de notre ère, le prodigieux mouvement religieux connu sous le nom de *bhakti* shivaïte a déferlé sur le pays tamoul, telle une vague de fond. Parmi les grands représentants de la *bhakti* shivaïte, la tradition privilégie les noms de 63 “saints”, ou Nāyaṇmār, dont la ferveur religieuse est célébrée dans une remarquable épopée datant du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, le Periya-purāṇam. Le mouvement a surtout été propagé par une kyrielle de poètes dont les œuvres forment les onze premiers volumes des saintes Ecritures (Tirumūrei) du shivaïsme tamoul. Les plus importants de ces poètes sont — dans l’ordre chronologique probable — Appar (début VII<sup>e</sup> siècle), Campantar et Cuntarar (un peu plus tard) dont les chants ou *patikam*, réunis en sept volumes, constituent un corpus appelé *Tēvāram*, ainsi que Māṇikkavācakar (IX<sup>e</sup> siècle), auteur d’un superbe ensemble de 51 hymnes, le Tiruvācakam. Les œuvres de ces quatre hommes sont la principale source de la présente étude.

### I

Pour commencer, il ne sera peut-être pas inutile de rappeler quelques éléments de l’histoire religieuse et politique du pays tamoul. Ces données sont indispensables à la compréhension des aspirations et des expériences religieuses des poètes saints.

La civilisation et la religion du Tamilnāḍ ancien, pendant la période qui précède l’éclosion de la *bhakti* shivaïte, nous sont connues grâce à un vaste corpus d’œuvres littéraires dont la plupart datent des premiers siècles de notre ère, alors que d’autres illustrent les siècles ultérieurs, jusqu’au VII<sup>e</sup> — c’est-à-dire jusqu’au seuil de la production littéraire des grands représentants de la *bhakti*. Il

s'agit de la littérature classique en langue tamoule, généralement désignée par le terme "Sangham literature".

Les informations religieuses contenues dans les textes les plus anciens mériteraient un plus long examen, afin d'en établir la liste complète. Notre propos étant autre, nous ne pouvons le faire ici.<sup>1</sup> Signalons toutefois que les divinités les plus populaires étaient Murukaṇ ou Cevvēl, le "Désiré rouge",<sup>2</sup> dieu de la montagne, guerrier, éternellement jeune, dieu des amours sauvages et clandestines, et Korravei,<sup>3</sup> déesse de la guerre et de la victoire. Le culte de ces deux divinités, surtout celui de Murukaṇ, était caractérisé par des danses frénétiques et extatiques appelées veriyāṭṭu: les textes nous montrent volontiers le vēlaṇ, prêtre de Murukaṇ, porteur d'une pique (vēl), pratiquer cette danse et se faire posséder par son dieu.<sup>4</sup> Par ailleurs, la pratique des offrandes et, en particulier, l'idée selon laquelle la guerre et la bataille sanglante sont des sacrifices, semblent se situer au cœur de la mentalité religieuse des anciens Tamouls. Les textes nous laissent deviner que la recherche de pouvoir a motivé bien des actes religieux.<sup>5</sup>

Nous verrons que ces éléments, en particulier les danses extatiques et la recherche de pouvoir, ont joué un certain rôle dans la naissance et le développement de la bhakti shivaïte en pays tamoul.

Parmi les nombreux genres littéraires chers aux poètes classiques des premiers siècles, il convient de faire mention du genre dit *akam*, c'est-à-dire érotique. Les conventions formelles de cette littérature, bien qu'assez rigides, offrent au poète d'innombrables possibilités d'invention originale et personnelle. Ces conventions prévoient l'expression du sentiment amoureux à tous les stades de son évolution, en commençant par les premières rencontres clandestines des amoureux (dans la forêt, sur les montagnes), jusqu'à leur mariage et même au-delà du mariage, aux affres de la séparation temporaire due à l'infidélité du mari ou à son départ pour la guerre. Les poètes évoquent alors la nostalgie de l'épouse délaissée, les querelles des époux au retour du mari infidèle et la réconciliation finale. — Inutile de préciser que les poètes de la *bhakti* ne manqueront pas de faire usage des conventions de ce genre littéraire.

Cultes extatiques, recherches de pouvoir et poésie amoureuse sont donc quelques facteurs qui contribueront à l'épanouissement de la *bhakti* shivaïte et de sa poésie. Il est cependant nécessaire de mentionner les facteurs qui déclencheront le mouvement.

Mentionnons tout d'abord la présence de plus en plus envahissante de deux pratiques religieuses et spirituelles ressenties comme "hétérodoxes" et étrangères au génie tamoul: le bouddhisme et le jinisme.<sup>6</sup> Il est probable que le premier a pénétré en Inde du Sud au plus tard à la suite de la politique religieuse (et morale) d'Asoka, au IIIe siècle avant J.-C. C'est là une date limite, car rien ne nous empêche de penser que des moines itinérants ont pu arriver au pays tamoul avant Asoka. Certes, Asoka n'a pas conquis la partie méridionale de la péninsule indienne, mais les inscriptions découvertes dans le pays tamoul, qui datent des deux ou trois derniers siècles avant J.-C., semblent déjà trahir l'influence et la présence de l'idéologie bouddhique et asokéenne.<sup>7</sup> Le jinisme est attesté épigraphiquement dès le premier siècle de notre ère.<sup>8</sup> Dans la littérature tamoule très ancienne (Ier au IIIe siècle après J.-C.), on trouve quelques allusions éparses à la présence de ces groupes, et telle œuvre littéraire de grande envergure datant d'une époque un peu plus tardive, est généralement attribuée à des auteurs bouddhistes ou, surtout, jinistes.<sup>9</sup>

A partir du début du VIIe siècle, les poètes de la *bhakti shivaïte* polémiquent avec vigueur contre les adeptes du Bouddha et du Jina, dont les enseignements et les pratiques attirent de nombreux habitants du pays et menacent dangereusement les religions traditionnelles. En effet, entre le IVe et le VIe siècle, le bouddhisme et le jinisme ont fait des progrès considérables dans les Royaumes de l'Inde du Sud. Favorisées par les monarques, généralement assez faibles et peu enclins à appliquer une politique stricte, ces deux religions semblent dominer la vie culturelle. Mais leur caractère par trop anti-émotif et anti-extatique, ainsi que la morale rigoureuse et le style de vie minutieusement réglementé des moines, vont provoquer une réaction quasi viscérale parmi les masses tamoules. A partir du VIIe siècle, cette réaction prend de l'ampleur, principalement à la suite de l'activité des poètes-saints qui, eux, ne manqueront pas de recourir à la religion extatique traditionnelle et aux conventions littéraires de la poésie érotique. Possédés et enflammés par leur dieu, ils utiliseront la fine analyse des sentiments qu'ils trouvent dans la poésie classique, afin de susciter et de stimuler l'ardeur religieuse chez leurs contemporains.

A côté du refus des religions bouddhiste et jiniste, il faut aussi tenir compte de la volonté du peuple tamoul de recréer une culture

nationale authentique. Après la période transitoire, dont nous venons de parler, qui a favorisé l'implantation d'éléments ressentis comme étrangers, on assiste, vers la fin du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle (aux alentours de 580), à l'établissement de quelques royaumes puissants, notamment de celui de Pallava, et à un regain d'intérêt pour les valeurs culturelles traditionnelles. Certes, il n'était plus possible de reprendre intégralement la civilisation tamoule du début de notre ère. La pénétration aryenne, déjà sensible dans les textes classiques et dans les inscriptions les plus anciennes, s'est fortement accentuée au fil des siècles et, vers la fin du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle, la culture et la religion tamoules en sont profondément marquées. Les divinités de l'Inde du Nord se sont enracinées au Sud: Shiva, Vishnu et ses avatāra, diverses formes de la déesse originaires du Nord. Les grands mythes relatifs à ces divinités se sont répandus dans le pays (parmi les mythes spécifiquement shivaïtes, mentionnons celui du baratage de l'océan de lait, de Shiva détruisant les trois villes des Asura, du sacrifice de Daksha, et le grand mythe du *linga* dont les extrémités sont inaccessibles à Vishnu et à Brahmā). Des temples sont construits, de plus en plus nombreux, de plus en plus vastes; les prêtres brahmaniques qui les desservent ne cessent d'élargir leur influence. Les rituels de ces temples s'élaborent petit à petit; basés à la fois sur d'anciennes traditions védiques et sur des pratiques indigènes, ils finissent par être codifiés dans la littérature dite des Agama. Les temples sont aussi le théâtre de grandes célébrations festives, célébrations qui réunissent des foules considérables et qu'on déclare indispensables à la prospérité, au bien-être du pays.<sup>10</sup> En ce qui concerne la vie sociale, il faut surtout rappeler la popularité croissante du *saṃnyāsa*, du renoncement, de la vie religieuse propre à ceux qui se retirent du monde et qui se consacrent uniquement à la recherche du Divin, à la quête de l'Absolu. Simultanément, les *darśana* traditionnels de l'hindouisme brahmanique, les diverses manières de concevoir cette quête, font leur entrée dans les pays du Sud, où ils finiront par trouver des défenseurs de valeur.<sup>11</sup>

Au moment où la conscience nationale des Tamouls s'éveille — vers la fin du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle — l'influence de la langue et de la culture aryennes ne saurait plus être éliminée. On ne le souhaite même pas. Les hommes, dont les poètes-saints shivaïtes, — et les rares femmes — qui donneront à la nouvelle conscience tamoule les

impulsions les plus mémorables sont souvent les brahmanes qui possèdent, à côté de leur amour pour les choses tamoules, une solide culture sanscrite. Ils vont s'appuyer sur les traditions authentiques du pays tamoul mais ils ne renieront pas le patrimoine aryen. Les dieux nationaux des Tamouls sont assimilés aux divinités du Nord: Murukaṇ sera identifié à Skanda ou Kārttikeya, fils de Shiva, et deviendra ainsi un fils de Shiva. Shiva lui-même sera considéré comme la véritable divinité du pays tamoul. Pour les poètes-saints shivaïtes, Shiva est le vrai patron de la langue et de la poésie tamoules, le président de la fameuse "Académie de Madurei" qui aurait établi les canons de la littérature classique. Il est aussi célébré comme le lieu où sont réunies les langues sanscrite et tamoule, comme l'auteur des quatre Veda et des Agama (sancrits) et l'inspirateur de la poésie religieuse des poètes-saints. Les nombreux sanctuaires dans lesquels il est adoré deviennent non seulement des centres de *bhakti* shivaïte, mais aussi les centres d'une culture religieuse à la fois authentiquement tamoule et riche d'un apport non négligeable de culture "nordique", c'est-à-dire sanscrite.<sup>12</sup>

## II

C'est dans ce contexte que s'inscrit la *bhakti*, mouvement de recherche passionnée d'une communion intime avec Dieu, qui éclôt vers la fin du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle. Ce sera un puissant élan de renouveau, visant à créer un nouveau type de synthèse entre les courants brahmanique septentrional et tamoul. Pour les *bhakta*, il ne s'agissait pas seulement de rendre un culte à la divinité — à Shiva, par exemple — dans ses sanctuaires où officiaient des prêtres brahmaniques, mais d'en faire une expérience intérieure, transformatrice, de se laisser posséder par Shiva, comme traditionnellement le vēlaṇ se faisait posséder par Murukaṇ. Il ne s'agissait pas seulement de construire des temples, d'y célébrer *pūjā* et fêtes, mais de développer, d'amplifier, de porter au paroxysme le "culte intérieur" (*antaryāga*) prévu dans la liturgie même. Il s'agissait en plus de vivre une relation personnelle, souvent tumultueuse, toujours exaltée, avec la divinité. Enfin, il s'agissait surtout de combattre les ennemis du Dieu personnel, les moines jinistes et bouddhistes, qui ne savaient apprécier ni la présence active de ces divinités, ni les expériences enthousiastes de leurs fidèles.

Voilà donc, très globalement, les aspirations collectives d'une importante section de la population en pays tamoul. Ces gens espéraient revivifier, au nom de Shiva (ou de Vishnu) les cultes extatiques, ancestraux, de Murukan et de Korravei; ils entendaient vivre leur identité tamoule en communion intime avec les dieux de la "grande tradition" qui étaient en train de s'implanter définitivement en pays tamoul; ils souhaitaient donner un nouvel éclat au patrimoine culturel et à ses valeurs: la langue tamoule, la création littéraire et artistique, les fêtes populaires et leurs rites, l'amour du pays et de sa configuration, en leur infusant une nouvelle vigueur religieuse et en éliminant ses détracteurs — les moines "hérétiques". On retenait certes l'idée de *saṃnyasa*, de renoncement au monde, mais il fallait que le *saṃnyasin* (le "renonçant") fût propulsé par le zèle irrésistible de son Dieu. C'est dire que la *bhakti* se développa dans le cadre des structures sociales traditionnelles, que la distinction entre les "renonçants" et les "hommes dans le siècle" (soumis au régime des castes) fut maintenue (comme, d'ailleurs, dans le bouddhisme ancien et le jnisme).<sup>13</sup>

Certes, au sein du mouvement des *bhakta* de shiva, la distinction entre les "renonçants" et les laïcs ne semble pas avoir été extrêmement rigoureuse. La tradition nous apprend que certains laïcs jouissaient, eux aussi, du statut — donc des honneurs et de la vénération — réservé normalement à un "renonçant," c'est-à-dire à un moine shivaïte. Pourtant, on n'accédait en principe à la dignité d'un *bhakta* véritable que par une sorte d'initiation accordée par Shiva lui-même: le Dieu agissait soit par l'intermédiaire d'un maître (comme prévu dans les Agama), soit par une intervention directe, par la "chute" spontanée de sa grâce (*śaktipāta*).<sup>14</sup> Si les poètes ne mentionnent guère le rite proprement dit de l'initiation (*dīkṣā*), ils font tout de même constamment état d'une expérience de type initiatique, en rappelant qu'ils ont été "pris en charge" par Shiva, que Shiva leur a posé le pied sur la tête, les assimilant ainsi à lui-même, qu'il leur a fait subir une transformation totale de leur être, qu'il "les a fait siens", qu'il les a "acquis" en les rendant semblables à lui-même.

Les *bhakta* ainsi élus, possédés, animés par Shiva sont les piliers du mouvement shivaïte. Ils vivent de mendicité, vénérés et entretenus par les "*bhakta* des *bhakta*", les adeptes laïcs.

L'aspiration collective du peuple tamoul touché par la *bhakti* se dédouble, tout en étant intimement unifiée. D'un côté, nous trouvons l'aspiration religieuse et culturelle — ces deux aspects de la vie nationale étant indissociables — de la grande communauté shivaïte, qui souvent s'identifiait avec une fraction importante de la société. D'autre part, l'aspiration des masses shivaïtes se concrétisait et se concentrait dans l'aspiration religieuse des moines, des “renonçants”, de ceux qui se savaient saisis par Shiva et qui s'abandonnaient entièrement à lui.

Les textes des poètes-saints sont littéralement bourrés de descriptions, souvent stéréotypées, de leur style de vie, de leur conduite envers le Dieu et les hommes, de leurs ambitions aussi. S'il n'est peut-être pas toujours légitime d'interpréter ces stéréotypes au pied de la lettre, ils offrent néanmoins, en vertu de leur caractère un peu impersonnel et quasi “officiel”, une idée assez complète de ce qu'on attendait des *bhakta* de Shiva et de ce à quoi ils aspiraient eux-mêmes. Le portrait un peu idéalisé qui ressort de ces textes nous fournit de précieux renseignements sur l'aspiration collective des groupes de moines et de la communauté des laïcs.

Avant de glaner dans les poésies des *bhakta* de Shiva des informations particulièrement instructives, voici d'abord quelques explications d'ordre linguistique.

La langue tamoule dispose d'un impressionnant arsenal de termes désignant les adeptes et les fervents de Shiva, les *pattar* (= *bhakta*). Dans chacun de ces termes est évoqué un élément essentiel de leur existence.

Les termes les plus courants sont *aṭiyār*, *tonṭar* et *aṇṇar*. Le premier est dérivé de *aṭi*, le “pied”, “ce qui est tout en bas”; les *aṭiyār* sont par conséquent des esclaves, au statut humble, qui s'approchent des “pieds” de Shiva. *Tonṭar* vient de *tonṭu*, service — ce sont les “serviteurs” de Shiva. *Aṇṇar*, enfin, est basé sur *aṇṇu*, “l'amour” et désigne au sens strict les “amoureux” de Shiva.

En plus, nous rencontrons un grand nombre de termes se rapportant d'une manière ou d'une autre au culte de Shiva. En voici les plus importants;

*Aṭeintavar*: ceux qui ont obtenu refuge et assurance auprès de Shiva.

*Paṇivār* et *tozhopuvar*: ceux qui “rendent un culte” à Shiva.

*Pāvīppavar*: ceux qui “contemplant”, qui “réalisent”, qui “personnifient” Shiva.<sup>15</sup>

Tous ces termes révèlent la nature du lien qui unit le *bhakta* à son Dieu. Nous sommes en présence d’une relation amoureuse, relation intime, certes, mais qui sauvegarde la position inférieure de l’homme. Il n’est jamais question d’une simple identification ou fusion de l’homme et de Dieu. Même quand le *aṭiyāṇ* se dit totalement possédé par Shiva, revêtu de ses qualités, rempli de lui — “pas un instant Shiva ne quitte ma poitrine” affirme Māṇikkavācakar (I, 2) —, la distinction fondamentale entre son être et celui de Dieu est toujours respectée: “Vivent les pieds de Shiva qui ne quittent pas une instant ma poitrine” dit le vers de Māṇikkavācakar que nous venons de citer. L’aspiration religieuse des communautés shivaïtes et des moines ne vise jamais une “communion” avec Dieu qui ferait de l’homme l’égal de Dieu ou de Dieu une simple extension de l’essence humaine.<sup>16</sup>

Les *aṭiyār* ou *aṇṇar* vivent souvent en groupes, en associations libres. Ensemble, parfois dirigés par l’un des leurs dont la ferveur exceptionnelle les subjugue, ils parcourent le pays, se rendent d’un temple à l’autre, ne s’arrêtent nulle part de manière définitive.<sup>17</sup> Ce sont des moines itinérants, des “apatrides”, des *anāgārika*, pour reprendre un terme bouddhique, et nous n’apprenons que très rarement qu’à tel endroit les *aṭiyār* n’ont jamais quitté le lieu.<sup>18</sup> Ajoutons par ailleurs qu’en pays tamoul, les monastères ou *maṭha* shivaïtes ne sont apparemment attestés qu’à partir du Xe siècle.<sup>19</sup>

Le fait que l’activité principale des *aṭiyār* s’est déroulée dans les sanctuaires shivaïtes est significatif: leur passion religieuse, leur éveil, allait de paire avec l’expansion et la consolidation du culte de Shiva dans les temples dont le nombre allait grandissant. Aucune opposition de principe ne semble avoir divisé les desservants (brahmaniques) des temples et les moines enthousiastes, itinérants.

Dans les temples, les *aṭiyār* rendent un culte régulier à la divinité; c’est la *pūjā*, dont le détail correspond très largement à la *pūjā* habituelle telle qu’elle est formalisée dans les Agama.<sup>20</sup> Tout d’abord, ils pratiquent le “sacrifice intérieur” (*antaryāga*) en déposant, moyennant “méditation” (*tiyāna* = sanscrit *dhyaṇa*), leur “esprit” (*citta*) en Shiva.<sup>21</sup> Ensuite, ils offrent *tūpam-tīpam-cantanam-malar*, c’est-à-dire “encens”, lumière, santal et fleurs: les ingrédients

(*upacāra*) les plus usuels de la *pūjā*. Ils se livrent à ce culte trois fois par jour — ils s'en tiennent donc (en tout cas ceux qui en parlent explicitement) à la tradition brahmanique des trois *sandhyā*: matin, midi et soir.

Leur renoncement au monde et leur appartenance à Shiva se traduit bien entendu par leur aspect extérieur. Vêtus uniquement du pagne caractéristique de Shiva (*kōvaṇam* = *kaupīna*), ornés du rosaire (*māla* ou *rudrākṣa*) et surtout couverts de cendres sacrées (*tirunīru*), ils se font immédiatement repérer. Entre eux, si besoin est, ils ne manquent pas de s'entraider: "Ceux qui portent les vêtements de Shiva sont mon refuge, mon aide" (Appar, 210, 24). Si l'entraide ne résoud pas toujours les problèmes d'ordre matériel, elle concerne en tout cas la vie spirituelle: la simple vue de ceux qui arborent les signes distinctifs des adeptes de Shiva projette les *tonṭar* dans un état de ravissement et d'adoration (Appar, 274, 3). Campantar, quant à lui, est persuadé que "les péchés disparaissent lorsqu'on est avec les *tonṭar*" (242, 2).

Les *tonṭar* participent, avons-nous souligné, à la *pūjā* quotidienne dans les temples — ils ne rejettent donc nullement le culte extérieur. Toutefois, leur activité principale consiste encore en autre chose: ils dansent et ils chantent. Les textes où ils font état du trop-plein de joie et de ferveur religieuse qui les habite et qui les force à s'extérioriser en une danse frénétique, ne se comptent pas: "Je dois te chanter; fondu, liquéfié intérieurement, je dois danser pour toi, le Danseur", s'écrit Māṇikkavācakar, au terme d'une composition dithyrambique (5, 100). Les poètes chantent "à gorge déployée" (Appar); ils récitent et chantent les noms de Dieu; ils font entendre des *tottiram* (= *stotra*, "louanges") et des *mantiram* (= *mantra*, "formules sacrées"); leur danse est une danse extatique.

C'est en évoquant l'expérience extatique que nous touchons au cœur même de l'aspiration religieuse des *tonṭar*. La tradition affirme en effet que les vrais *aṭṭiyār* se font reconnaître par dix signes <sup>(22)</sup>: voix chevrotante ou défaillante d'émotion, langue bégayante, lèvres frémissantes, tremblements et agitation du corps, chair de poule, membres échauffés et transpirants (suite à la danse?), démarche chancelante, comme celle d'un ivrogne, suivie d'un effondrement qui les jette à terre,<sup>23</sup> visage inondé de pleurs trahissant un bouleversement insoutenable, sentiment d'être emporté, voire aliéné par

le désir amoureux. C'est un comportement d'hommes "fous": ils se disent eux-même *pittar*, fous, en jouant sur le mot *pattar* (= *bhakta*), "dévots" — le vrai dévot n'est plus maître de sa destinée.

Dans les œuvres des poètes-saints, il est souvent fait mention de larmes. Les dévots, émaciés, agités au plus profond de leur être par la quête passionnée de Dieu, ne dominent plus leurs réactions. Les rires alternent avec les pleurs: "Ils s'esclaffent, ils exultent, ils savourent du miel; s'attroupant, s'attroupant, ils proclament ta divine grandeur..." (Tiruvācakam 21, 9); "S'assemblant, s'assemblant, tes serviteurs (*aṭiyār*) se courbent, s'esclaffent, exultent..." (ib., 32, 11). Mais aussi: "Se réunissant, se réunissant, les *tonṭar* assument sans faute le service qui est le leur: ils dansent, ils chantent, poussés par l'amour, ils fondent en pleurs — et toi, (Shiva,) tu ne songes pas à les combler" (Cuntarar., 5, 5).

A l'opposé de ces débordements incontrôlés, il faut aussi mentionner leur contrepartie: le *tavam* (= *tapas*), l'ascèse, un effort constant de type yogique visant à subjuguier, voire même à mortifier les sens et, par là même, à supprimer les perceptions sensorielles. D'après l'enseignement traditionnel du shivaïsme tamoul, c'est l'activité des sens physiques qui empêche l'homme de reconnaître sa parenté intime avec Dieu.<sup>24</sup> Le but de cette ascèse est de faire oublier, d'oblitérer, tout objet de perception et de conscience hormis la seule conscience de Shiva et de l'amour qu'on lui porte. Les *aṭiyār* aspirent à *Civacārūṇṇam*, une forme d'existence semblable à celle de Shiva — l'un des degrés suprêmes de la *bhakti* sanscrite (*sārūṇṇa*). Aussi refusent-ils d'écouter et de prendre au sérieux tout discours qui risquerait de détourner leur attention de Shiva. Leur ascèse consiste à pousser la passion amoureuse à son paroxysme.

C'est ainsi que, chez ces amoureux de Dieu, l'ascèse physique et morale rejoint les débordements incontrôlés de l'affectivité. Nous retrouvons ici quelques thèmes de la littérature amoureuse traditionnelle: leur passion pour Shiva les use, les consume; l'homme intérieur "fond", il se liquéfie et les os eux-mêmes "fondent comme de la cire". Ils se sentent comme privés de leur personnalité propre: ils se "plaignent" souvent, tout en s'en félicitant, que Shiva "a volé leur esprit".

Si donc la personnalité subit un processus de dissolution, le sentiment de la présence active de Shiva, en revanche, s'intensifie et la

relation avec lui s'affine constamment. Le vocabulaire qui exprime cette relation est étonnamment riche et varié. On y trouve, tout d'abord, de nombreux verbes et tournures analysant la préoccupation intérieure, permanente, avec Shiva: ils "méditent"; assis, couchés, debout, en marchant, de jour et de nuit ils "pensent à lui", ils "déposent leur esprit en lui", ils constatent qu'il a "pénétré dans l'esprit", qu'il "est entré dans le mental", qu'il "en a pris possession". Ils "saisissent Shiva fermement au-dedans d'eux" et, surtout, ils "l'intériorisent", le réalisent dans leur intériorité au détriment de leur intériorité humaine (en tamoul: *uḷkutaḷ*). Le souvenir obsédant de Shiva, le sentiment d'être absorbé par Shiva, va jusqu'à provoquer des visions de la divinité — visions dont le détail est déterminé par l'iconographie et la mythologie shivaïtes.

Quand l'homme se donne entièrement à Shiva, Shiva lui-même ne reste évidemment pas en arrière: il se donne, lui aussi. Comme les *aṇḍar* aiment Shiva, ainsi Shiva aime ceux qui l'aiment. Il leur prodigue tout ce dont ils ont besoin: nourriture, santé, joie, sécurité et certitude. Il leur est "miel et ambroisie"; il s'offre à eux comme leur refuge, leur confident, leur chef, leur ami désiré, l'ombre qui les protège ... Il les libère de toute peur et, par-dessus tout, il abolit le poids du *karman*. Par conséquent, les *tonṭar* ne manquent de rien; ils jouissent d'une totale liberté — de cette liberté qui est l'éternelle nostalgie de l'homme pris dans l'engrenage de la vie sociale. La liberté dont les amis de Dieu peuvent se prévaloir leur permet à l'occasion d'en user même vis-à-vis de leur bien-aimé. Il arrive en effet qu'ils aient l'impression d'être négligés et oubliés de Dieu; c'est alors qu'ils le taquinent familièrement et, à l'occasion, osent même lui adresser des reproches amers, sinon acerbes. Ces moments de dérélition et de révolte contre un Dieu apparemment capricieux sont significatifs: ils nous prouvent que, contrairement aux prétentions de l'*advaita* pur, l'aspiration des *tonṭar* ne vise nullement l'identification absolue avec la divinité. Ce à quoi ils tendent, c'est à connaître et à vivre toute la richesse de la vie divine, c'est à être "illuminés dedans et dehors par la lumière de Shiva", mais jamais à réaliser une identité ontologique au sens de l'identité *brahman-ātman* affirmée par l'*advaita* shankarien.

## III

Cette analyse des *tonṭar* et de leurs aspirations peut déjà s'appliquer au premier des grands poètes de la *bhakti* shivaïte: Tirunāvukkaracu, ou Appar (env. 600 ou début VIIe siècle). Si Appar est le premier auquel on doit une vaste collection de poèmes — exactement 313 —, il n'est bien entendu pas le fondateur du mouvement: il n'a fait qu'entrer dans la danse et la vivre à sa manière. Au service d'un roi jiniste, Appar avoue lui-même avoir été attiré et séduit par les moines jinistes, par leurs pratiques aussi bien que par leur philosophie. Il admet que, pendant un certain temps, il a oublié Shiva. Ce n'est qu'à la suite d'une intervention de sa sœur, fidèle adepte de Shiva, qu'il s'est converti — ou reconverti — au shivaïsme et qu'il a fait siennes les aspirations des *tonṭar*, afin de partager leur expérience, de devenir un chantre, un propagandiste de l'amour de son Dieu. La tradition affirme que, devenu dévot de Shiva, il a quitté la cour de son roi demeuré jiniste. Les moines jinistes accrédités auprès de celui-ci, se rendant compte du rayonnement spirituel de l'apostat et craignant pour leur avenir, auraient persuadé leur protecteur d'envoyer un détachement militaire auprès d'Appar, afin de le ramener à l'ordre. Ce qui aurait été fait — sans succès, évidemment.

Il semble bien qu'Appar lui-même confirme l'exactitude de la tradition. Il a, en effet, laissé un *patikam* (= un genre littéraire; hymne composé de 10 ou 11 strophes) où il fait allusion à un tel événement. Il s'agit d'un poème autobiographique évoquant la conversion du poète au shivaïsme.

Ce poème peut être considéré comme le reflet, admirable par la clarté et la beauté de ses lumières, de l'expérience personnelle d'un homme saisi par l'aspiration religieuse collective du groupe dont il va partager la pratique et le style de vie.

Bien que le texte mérite une exégèse détaillée, nous nous contenterons de quelques remarques à propos de chaque strophe.

Nous notons, pour commencer, que dans ce poème où Appar fait état de son expérience personnelle et de ses certitudes intimes, il s'exprime presque toujours à la première personne du pluriel: "nous". Il n'a pas cette habitude — il n'a que très exceptionnellement recours à cette manière de parler de lui-même dans le cadre

d'une collectivité. Pourquoi le fait-il ici? Sans doute désire-t-il souligner sa solidarité au groupe dont il fait désormais partie et le fait que son expérience, bien qu'éminemment personnelle, n'est nullement singulière. Ce qu'il vit personnellement est en parfait accord avec les aspirations et les expériences de ses confrères.

1. Nous ne sommes redevables à personne. Naman, nous ne le craignons pas. Nous ignorons la misère de l'enfer, n'éprouvons aucune peine. Nous exultons. Foin de la maladie! Nous ne sommes à la merci de personne. Toujours à l'aise — de malaise pas trace. Nous serons à jamais les serveurs indéfectibles de Shankara, du roi à l'oreille parée de boucles de nacre. Lui n'est redevable à personne. Nous sommes proches de ses deux pieds, de ses pieds roses, couleur de fleurs fraîches.

Appar se félicite de jouir d'une liberté totale: il ne se soumet à aucune autorité humaine. Il imite en cela son unique maître, Shiva, qui n'est redevable à aucun être hormis lui-même. Proche de Shiva, protégé par lui, le poète ne craint ni la maladie (la tradition affirme que, suite à ses sympathies jinistes, Appar a été frappé d'une pénible maladie, mais guéri immédiatement après sa conversion au shivaïsme), ni Naman, dieu de la Mort (= Yama), ni — surtout! — les enfers, c'est-à-dire une nouvelle naissance dans des conditions déplorables. A la fin de sa vie présente, il ira rejoindre le ciel de Shiva — les poètes ne cessent de répéter que la mort n'a aucun pouvoir sur eux. Il ne craint pas non plus le roi jiniste, dont la tentative de récupération est d'emblée vouée à l'échec.

2. Parcourant le vaste monde, allant de ville en ville Nous mangeons dans les maisons, nous mangeons ce qu'on nous dépose dehors, jamais nous ne refusons la pitance. Arrivés en un lieu, nous couchons sur la place publique, à côté de la déesse Terre qui ne nous trompe pas. C'est là la pure vérité. Acceptés par le maître du puissant taureau, nous sommes sans reproche. Désormais nous ne manquons de rien — finie la misère! Serions-nous obligés d'écouter les paroles de ceux qui s'amènent, tout pleins d'or et habillés de vêtements somptueux?

Appar décrit son style de vie, qui est celui de tous les *tonṭar*: ce n'est que pérégrination, mendicité, pauvreté, nuits passées à la belle étoile et acceptation de tout ce qu'on leur donne. En ce qui concerne ce dernier trait, rappelons que les poètes reprochent aux moines jinistes d'être excessivement pointilleux sur la qualité de la nourriture. Malgré leur dénuement, les *aṭiyār* ne manquent de rien, car ils sont "acceptés par Shiva" (le "puissant taureau" = Nandi,

la monture de Shiva): l'expression fait peut-être allusion au rite d'initiation (*dīkṣā*), qui fait de l'adepte un associé du Dieu. "Désormais": cette déclaration concerne en premier lieu Appar lui-même qui vient de rallier les mendiants de Shiva. La dernière ligne contient la fin de non recevoir opposée aux envoyés du roi jinite.

3. Nous ne pénétrons pas dans les maisons où logent les femmes vêtues de longues robes.

Chantant "Mātēvā! Mātēvā!", dès avant le lever du soleil, Nous procédons aux ablutions matinales.

Nos corps sont resplendissants, couverts de cendres sacrées. Nous faisons pleuvoir des larmes, telle la pluie des nuages noirs,

Et notre mental (*maṇam* = *maṇas*) de pierre se transforme en mental bon.

Serions-nous obligés d'écouter les paroles de ceux qui dominent la terre et qui viennent, portés par des éléphants? Nous sommes libres d'attaches.

Suite à l'évocation des nuits passées sur les places publiques (strophe 2), Appar poursuit la description du style de vie des *tonṭar*: invocation de Shiva (Mātēvā = Mahādeva) immédiatement au réveil, avant le lever du soleil; ablutions rituelles ... — conformément à la tradition liturgique et rituelle codifiée dans les Agama. Après l'application des cendres sacrées caractéristique du culte de Shiva, la journée est passée dans une intense émotion religieuse (les pleurs!) qui transforme l'homme intérieur. Le "mental" (*manas*) imperméable et indifférent (parce que relié à l'activité sensorielle) devient malléable et soumis à Dieu, parce qu'il est "liquéfié" par l'amour de Dieu et par l'intervention de Shiva lui-même.

4. Notre clan: les nombreuses assemblées de Uruttiraṇ (= Rudra).

Nos habits: le pagne et la ceinture des ascètes.

Nos ennemis ne nous inquiètent pas. Le mal lui-même se change en un bien éclatant.

Nous ne renaîtrons plus.

Nous sommes en mesure de dire l'illustre "*Namaccivāya*!" en l'honneur du Dieu couronné du parfum de fleurs odoriférantes.

Nous le suivons, Lui, la Lumière, aux yeux resplendissants, qui a réduit en cendres le dieu dont l'emblème est le poisson (= *Kāma*).

Voici le culte pratiqué par les ascètes de Rudra/Shiva, du Dieu qui, ascète lui-même, a incendié par le feu de son œil frontal Kāma, l'Eros hindou: ils s'approchent du symbole du Dieu — généralement un linga orné de fleurs odoriférantes — en chantant le mantra principal du Dieu: *Namaccivāya* (= *Namaḥ śivāya*, "hommage à Shiva"!)). Le rappel du fait — déjà évoqué dans la première strophe

— que toute crainte est abolie, notamment la peur d'une nouvelle naissance due au *karman*, met en évidence le rôle central de cette conviction.

5. Nous n'allons pas servir les petits dieux — nous ne rallions que les pieds sacrés du Prince Shiva.  
 Nous ne manquons de rien, de rien du tout.  
 La misère poignante de la maladie a disparu: elle s'est enfuie.  
 Protégés par les mérites du Méritant dont la tête est ornée d'une guirlande de crânes,  
 Nous n'obéirons jamais à personne — personne dans les deux mondes ne peut nous résister.

Nous trouvons ici des allusions autobiographiques: la maladie considérée comme conséquence de la séduction exercée par les moines jinistes, mais rapidement guérie après la conversion au shivaïsme, le refus de donner suite aux nouvelles sollicitations du roi. L'expression "les petits dieux" concerne naturellement toutes les divinités autres que celle qui seule compte: Shiva, mais probablement aussi les *tīrthaṅkara* jinistes. En revanche, l'allusion aux "mérites du Méritant" n'est pas sans rappeler l'idéologie bouddhique selon laquelle les "mérites" (*puṇya*) des Bodhisattva, "transférés" (*pariṇāma*) aux croyants, les protègent et les font avancer dans la quête spirituelle. Pour Appar, seul Shiva possède des "mérites" et quiconque se réfugie dans ses mérites jouit d'une indépendance totale.

6. "O Toi! Fondement des trois personnes! ô forme octuple! corps semblable au corail rouge!  
 Shiva, que les trente-trois dieux et tous les sages magnifient et glorifient!" —  
 Seuls ceux qui font entendre ce cri sont nos maîtres.'  
 N'étant ni voleurs, ni menteurs, nous ne sommes pas obligés d'écouter des souverains qui envoient des messagers,  
 Même s'ils dominent le Jambu-dvīpa (= le sub-continent indien) tout entier.

Shiva, unique maître du *bhakta*, se manifeste à travers ceux qui invoquent son nom. Toutefois, cette invocation ne se limite pas à la simple énonciation de son nom: elle est riche d'une théologie et d'une philosophie qui essaie de définir la nature du Dieu. Shiva est "le fondement des trois personnes": c'est en lui que les trois *mūrti* ont leur existence — il est lui même les trois *mūrti* ou formes du Divin: Brahmā, Vishnu et Rudra, qui déterminent le déploiement de l'univers (*sṛṣṭi*), sa durée limitée (*sthiti*) et sa résorption (*saṃhāra*).

Etant lui-même les Trimūrti, il transcende l'univers psychophysique, tout en lui restant étroitement associé: sa forme, ou son "corps", est "octuple" (*aṣṭamūrti*), composé des cinq éléments terre, eau, air, feu et "espace" (plutôt: "éther"), du soleil, de la lune et du "maître du sacrifice" (*yajamāna*) — une ancienne spéculation purānique qui sera reprise et développée dans la théologie āgamique. En plus, son corps manifesté est "rouge"; il a la couleur du feu, auquel Shiva est toujours associé. Puisque Shiva représente le Divin dans sa totalité, il va de soi qu'il est constamment glorifié par les dieux et les sages (les *ṛṣi*).

7. Nous avons le devoir de parler de la bonté et de la beauté de Celui qui est, Lui-même, tout ce qui est immobile et tout ce qui est mobile.  
 Qui est terre, eau, feu, air et "espace" ("éther").  
 Qui est petit, qui est grand, inconnaissable et facilement atteignable pour ceux qui l'aiment; sans mesure, toujours lui-même, Sadāshiva:  
 Parler de Lui qui est "Lui", qui est "moi".

Le poète ajoute quelques précisions d'ordre théologique. Shiva, en tant que *aṣṭamūrti*, être à la forme octuple (cf. strophe 6), constitue l'univers — en un sens il *est* l'univers —; pourtant, en réalité, il n'est pas l'univers, il se situe au-delà de celui-ci. A l'instar de toute adoration de type "mystique", le langage d'Appar est caractérisé par des paradoxes: seul le paradoxe est apte à évoquer la réalité divine. Par conséquent, Shiva est, rigoureusement parlant, inconnaissable, inaccessible à la réflexion. Pourtant — nouveau paradoxe —, il est "facilement atteint" par ceux qui l'aiment: c'est l'amour passionné qui opère l'union. Union que le poète rappelle en formulant un dernier paradoxe: Shiva est à la fois "Lui" et "moi". "Je" suis "Lui" parce que nous sommes de même essence ultime et parce qu'il est en moi — et pourtant nous sommes distincts: "Lui" et "moi" ne fusionnent jamais. "Je" (*ātman*) existe, mais il n'existe qu'en "Lui" et par "Lui".

8. Sans cesse, nous pensons au Seigneur, au Monarque de tous les mondes, Au Prince des dieux (du Himālaya), au Resplendissant qui brille telle une flamme.  
 A l'Amant qui, le corps rouge recouvert de cendres blanches, réjouit la fille chérie du roi de la montagne (i.e. Pārvatī).  
 L'enseignement que les "mangeurs debout" (les jiniistes) m'ont donné à méditer  
 Je l'ai entièrement oublié.  
 Vous qui êtes venus, qui êtes-vous?  
 Qui est l'homme qui prétend être roi?

Les éléments de théologie shivaïte que nous trouvons dans cette strophe sont, comme très souvent, empruntés à la mythologie et à l'iconographie. Relevons qu'ici, Shiva apparaît comme un amant qui "réjouit" sa compagne, alors que dans la strophe 4, il était présenté comme un ascète qui a anéanti tout désir sexuel (en consommant Kāma). La polarité ascèse rigoureuse / jouissance sexuelle, typique de la mythologie shivaïte, a été bien mise en évidence par W. D. O'Flaherty.<sup>25</sup> — Ce que les *tonṭar* reprochent aux moines jīnistes, ce n'est pas leur enseignement (qu'Appar prétend avoir oublié), mais leurs mœurs: ils mangent sans se laver les mains; de manière générale, ils n'observent pas les rites shivaïtes (et généralement āgamiques) de *śauca* et de *śuddhi* (la purification), ils se montrent excessivement pointilleux en ce qui concerne la nourriture, ils mangent en se tenant debout, et, surtout, ils se promènent entièrement nus (les Digambara) (cf. ici strophe 10). A la fin, Appar manifeste une fois de plus son mépris pour les ordres du roi jīniste.

9. Le Dieu à la tignasse foisonnante, à l'oreille ornée de boucles de nacre, au corps recouvert de cendres et de serpents,  
 Le Dieu qui, vêtu d'une peau de tigre et d'une peau de biche, de biche tachetée, d'un brillant argenté,  
 Le riche propriétaire, c'est Lui qui nous possède.  
 Vous l'avez donc compris?  
 Notre tâche n'est pas d'obéir à quelqu'un qui commande une armée formée de vous-mêmes et de gens comme vous:  
 Notre manière est de jeter loin le "lien" (*pācam*).

Le Dieu "Propriétaire" de tout l'univers "possède" aussi le *tonṭar*, mais tout en étant dans son essence véritablement autre — puisqu'il "possède" les phénomènes —, il est néanmoins accessible à l'imagination et à la pensée à travers sa représentation culturelle, à travers 'l'idole', c'est-à-dire son "image". — L'indépendance du *bhakta* et le mépris souverain qu'il manifeste à l'égard de l'ordre du roi sont fondés dans le fait que, par la grâce de Shiva et à travers l'initiation qu'il a reçue, il a été libéré des-"liens" — le *karman*, le monde psycho-somatique et une inscience congénitale — qui enchaînent l'*ātman*.

10. D'une langue alerte, nous chantons l'Ami désirable.  
 Nous vivons retirés, de peur de voir approcher ces gens impudiques.  
 Le Maître des immortels qui a pris possession de moi en appelant "Ah! ah!",  
 Shiva, Dieu des dieux qui, immense colonne de feu, ne fut pas reconnu par Ayaṇ (Brahmā) et Māl (Vishnu)

Est entré — et il demeure — dans mon esprit.

Si le roi du Sud (Yama, le dieu Mort) venait en personne, monter en épingle sa dignité

Et me dire: “Fais un petit effort!” — nous ne le prendrions pas au sérieux.

Nous sommes habillés des huit qualités (de notre Dieu).

(Appar no. 312 = Tēvāram VI, 98).

Appar désire surtout se soustraire à l'influence “des gens impudiques”, c'est-à-dire des jinistes Digambara qui pratiquent la nudité intégrale. — “Ah! ah!” est une exclamation de compassion: Shiva est, par excellence, le Dieu de la “grande compassion” (*mahā-karuṇā*). Une dernière fois, dans ce poème, Appar fait usage d'un langage paradoxal: Shiva est certes absolument “inconnaissable” — ni Brahmā ni Vishnu, les grands dieux, ne l'ont reconnu quand il s'est manifesté devant eux sous la forme d'un immense linga de feu dont ils n'ont pu découvrir ni la base, ni le sommet —, mais le *bhakta* le connaît puisqu'il est “entré dans son esprit”. En plus ceux qui atteignent Shiva sont “revêtus de ses huit qualités” — ce n'est d'ailleurs qu'à condition de “devenir” Shiva, de s'habiller de ses qualités, que le fidèle peut vraiment rendre un culte à son Dieu. Rappelons que l'octroi des qualités (*guṇa*) de Shiva forme le moment culminant des rites d'initiation.<sup>26</sup>

*Conclusion.* En abordant l'étude de la *bhakti* tamoule dans son contexte global, nous nous trouvons en présence d'un vaste mouvement de renouveau non seulement religieux, mais d'abord politique, culturel et national, les diverses strates de ce mouvement étant imbriquées les unes dans les autres. Le côté religieux de ce mouvement se développait probablement sous la direction des brahmanes et tendait surtout à raviver la ferveur religieuse théiste, en opposition aux mouvements jinistes et bouddhistes. Le culte des divinités purāniques, Shiva et Vishnu, propagé et pratiqué dans des temples de plus en plus nombreux, recevait des assises émotionnelles, mais aussi théologiques, en s'implantant dans la tradition religieuse indigène, en particulier les pratiques extatiques. Ainsi, l'institution religieuse et brahmanique du *saṃnyāsa* fut adaptée, à travers ses mutations jinistes et bouddhistes, à la mentalité et aux aspirations religieuses du peuple tamoul. Le renonçant devient un serviteur enthousiaste, “possédé” et extatique, des grandes divinités purāniques et āgamiques: Shiva et Vishnu. Les chants du Tēvāram shivaïte — les hymnes d'Appar, de Cuntarar et de Campantar — et

les poésies de Māṇikkavācakar, attestent l'assimilation personnelle, au travers d'une expérience individuelle, des grandes aspirations collectives, par les poètes religieux voués exclusivement au service de leur Dieu.

Rappelons, pour terminer, que l'expérience personnelle de ces poètes finira par servir de modèle à de nouvelles aspirations — et expériences — tant collectives qu'individuelles.

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<sup>1</sup> Pour la situation religieuse au Tamilnādu à l'époque classique (I-III<sup>e</sup> s.), cf. notamment les ouvrages suivants: K. A. Nilakantha Sastri, *Development of Religion in South India*, Bombay etc., 1963, p. 12-34. S. Singaravelu, *Social Life of the Tamils — The Classical Period*, Kuala Lumpur, 1966, p. 101-167. Devapoopathy Nadarajah, *Women in the Tamil Society — The Classical Period*, Kuala Lumpur, 1966, p. 113-124. George L. Hart, III, *The Poems of Ancient Tamil — Their Milieu and their Sanskrit Counterparts*, Berkeley etc., 1975, p. 21-137. K. R. Srinivasan, *Some Aspects of Religion as Revealed by Early Monuments and Literature of the South*, Madras, 1960. D. D. Shulman, *Tamil Temple Myths*, Princeton, 1980, Passim. Etant donné les méthodologies divergentes mises en œuvre par ces auteurs, le sujet mériterait une nouvelle étude.

<sup>2</sup> Parmi les nombreuses études du dieu Murukaṇ-Subrahmaniam-Skanda-Kārttikeya, signalons les plus récentes: François Gros, *Le Paripāṭal — Texte tamoul*, Pondicherry, 1968, p. XXXVIII-XLVIII. Heinz Bechert, "Eine alte Gottheit in Ceylon und Südindien", dans: *Beiträge zur Geistesgeschichte Indiens* (Festschrift für Erich Frauwallner), Wien, 1968, p. 33-42. Asim Kumar Chatterjee, *The Cult of Skanda-Kārttikeya in Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1970. Jean Filliozat, *Un texte de la religion kaumāra — Le Tirumurukārupāṭai*, Pondicherry, 1973. Fred W. Clothey, *The Many Faces of Murukaṇ — The History and Meaning of a South Indian God*, The Hague etc., 1978. — La traduction "Le Désiré rouge" pour Cevvēl est proposée par F. Gros, op. cit. p. XLII.

<sup>3</sup> Sur Korravei, cf. en particulier l'étude de Devapoopathy Nadarajah (n. 1).

<sup>4</sup> On lira une description de la danse chez F. Gros (n. 2), p. XLIII.

<sup>5</sup> Ces pratiques ont été mises en évidence notamment par G. L. Hart (n. 1).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. l'étude particulièrement instructive de Glenn E. Yocum, "Shrines, Shamanism and Love Poetry", dans: *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, vol. XLI (1973), reprint. Le même: "Buddhism through Hindu Eyes: Saivas and Buddhists in Medieval Tamilnad", dans: *Traditions in Contact and Change* (XVIth Congress of the IAHR), Ontario, 1983, p. 143-162.

<sup>7</sup> Le langage et l'apport historique des plus anciennes inscriptions tamoules ont été étudiés par Iravatham Mahadevan: "Tamil-Brahmi Inscriptions of the Sangam Age", in: *Proceedings of the Second International Conference Seminar of Tamil Studies*, Madras-India, 1968, Madras 1971, vol. I, p. 73-106.

<sup>8</sup> Selon I. Mahadevan, op. cit. (n. 7), p. 94s, la première attestation du jinisme dans le Tamilnādu pourrait dater de la fin du II<sup>e</sup> siècle avant J.-C.

<sup>9</sup> Il s'agit essentiellement des épopées Maṇimēkalai (bouddhiste) et Cilappatikāram (jinite), ainsi que d'un ouvrage de contenu gnomique, le Tiru-Kuṛaḷ (probablement jinite).

<sup>10</sup> D'après le Rauravāgama, Kriyāpāda, 18, 8ss (éd. N. R. Bhatt, Pondicherry, 1961, vol. I, p. 70), la célébration des grandes fêtes assure la réalisation de tous les désirs: une célébration d'un jour apporte l' "apaisement" (*śānti*), celle de trois jours la "prospérité" (*puṣṭi*), celle de cinq jours la "victoire" (*jaya*), celle de sept jours la "richesse" (*dhana*) et celle de neuf jours "tous les désirs" (*kāma*): on comprend que ce genre de promesses ait contribué à rendre ces grandes fêtes populaires.

<sup>11</sup> Māṇikkavācakar (Tiruvācakam 4, 46-56) donne une liste assez suggestive des divers mouvements religieux et philosophiques qui sollicitaient l'attention d'un homme attiré par la vie spirituelle: *nāttika* (jinistes et bouddhistes), brahmanes prônant le *saṃnyāsa* ou vantant les *cāttiram* (= *śāstra*, les sciences), les divers mouvements religieux (*camayam* = *samaya*, "sectes" vishnuïtes et shivaïtes), les "terribles" *māyāvādin* (advaitistes de type shankarien) et les matérialistes (*lokāyata*).

<sup>12</sup> Ce processus qui est parfois (à la suite du sociologue N. N. Srinivas) défini comme un processus de "sanskritisation", ou alors interprété (dans la terminologie de R. Redfield) comme l'interaction entre la "petite tradition" (locale) et la "grande tradition" (englobante), est maintenant décrit par Anncharlott Eschmann comme un processus "d'hindouisation". Anncharlott Eschmann insiste à juste titre sur le fait que ce processus se développe sous la forme d'un "continuum" consistant en des interactions constantes et multilatérales entre les deux pôles extrêmes formés par les religions tribales et le système religieux "codifié" dans les textes sanscrits. cf. Anncharlott Eschmann, dans: Eschmann/Kulke / Tripathi, *The Cult of Jagannath and the Regional Tradition of Orissa*, New Delhi, 1978, p. 79ss.

<sup>13</sup> L'enracinement social de la *bhakti* tamoule est donc différent de celui qui est préconisé dans la Bhagavadgita. Dans cette dernière, Krishna insiste sur la nécessité pour chacun de pratiquer la *bhakti* dans le cadre de son métier et de son insertion sociale habituelle. Dans la *bhakti* tamoule, ce principe n'est pas entièrement renié mais fortement remis en question.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Hélène Brunner-Lachaux, *Somaśambhupaddhati*, vol. III, Pondicherry 1977, p. VIII.

<sup>15</sup> Substantif tamoul dérivé du sanscrit *bhāvanā*: "ceux qui pratiquent *bhāvanā*; la "réalisation" de telle attitude particulière de *bhakti* ou de telle manifestation de la divinité.

<sup>16</sup> On comparera avec les données des hymnes l'élaboration philosophique du même statut de *bhakta* non seulement dans les textes tamouls du Shaiva-Siddhānta, mais aussi dans les Agama. Le statut ontologique du *bhakta* (: il est, en tant qu'*ātman*, de même essence que Shiva, mais distinct de lui) se retrouve dans la théologie vishnuïte de Rāmānuja.

<sup>17</sup> Le style de vie des *aṭiyār* ou *aṇṇar* est décrit de manière saisissante dans l'hagiographie shivaïte du Periyapurāṇam, de Cēkkizhār (XIIe/XIIIe siècles).

<sup>18</sup> Cf. par exemple, Campantar, no. 255, 9 (Tēvāram II, 118, 9).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. R. N. Nandi, *Religious Institutions and Cults in the Deccan*, Delhi, 1973, p. 76ss. — Pour l'évolution ultérieure des monastères shivaïtes en Inde du Sud, cf. M. Rajamanikkam, "The Tamil Shaiva Mathas under the Colas (A.D. 900-1300)", dans: *Essays in Philosophy*, éd. T. M. P. Mahadevan, Madras, 1962, p. 217-225.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. la remarquable analyse de la *pūjā* shivaïte par Hélène Brunner-Lachaux, *Somaśambhupaddhati*, vol. I, Pondicherry, 1963, — les allusions des poètes sont évidemment beaucoup moins complètes que le traité systématique de Somaśambhu!

<sup>21</sup> Cf. l'analyse très poussée de la pratique religieuse des *tonṭar* par M. A. Dorai Rangaswamy, *The Religion and Philosophy of Tēvāram*, Book II, Madras 1959, p. 1061 ss.

<sup>22</sup> Enumérés, par exemple, par V. C. Ceṅkalvarāya Piḷḷei: *Tēvāra oḷineri kaṭṭurei*, Cennei 1959, p. 8, n. 1.

<sup>23</sup> Phénomène commun à toutes les formes de danse de possession, célèbre en particulier dans la danse classique des derviches tourneurs!

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Civa-nāna-pōtam 7: "Eveillé, grâce aux austérités (qu'il a pratiquées) par le *guru* suprême (= Shiva) qui lui dit: 'Tu as dormi, réduit à l'impuissance par les cinq chasseurs, les sens', l'*ātam* rejoint les pieds de Shiva puisqu'il est de même nature que Lui". — Cf. sur ce thème: C.-A. Keller, "Perception sensorielle et perception de la Vérité", dans: *Adversus tempus* (Mélanges W. Rordorf), Neuchâtel, 1983, p. 84-94.

<sup>25</sup> Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Asceticism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Śiva*, London, 1973.

<sup>26</sup> Appar dit: *en-kunatt-ul-ōm*, "nous sommes dans les huit *guṇa* de Shiva", donc revêtus de ces *guṇa*. Lors de la *nirvāṇa-dīkṣā*, l'initiation principale, l'initié est investi de six *guṇa* de Shiva: omniscience, contentement (*trṣṭi*), éveil-dépuis-toujours (*anādibodha*), liberté, puissance indestructible et puissance infinie (Hélène Brunner-Lachaux, *Somaśambhupaddhati*, vol. III, Pondicherry 1977, p. 399). En revanche, lors du *sādhaka-abhiṣeka* ("consécration du *sādhaka*", de celui qui vise l'acquisition de *siddhi*, de pouvoirs exceptionnels), le candidat reçoit huit *guṇa*. La liste des huit *guṇa* varie à l'intérieur de la tradition du shivaïsme tamoul. Parfois même, ces *guṇa* sont interprétés comme étant huit "pouvoirs" ou *siddhi*. Selon la tradition philosophique du Siddhānta, ces *guṇa* sont les produits de *rāga*, lui-même produit de *guṇa rajas* (V. A. Devasenapathi, *Saiva Siddhānta, as Expounded in the Śiva-jñāna-siddhiyār and its Six Commentaries*, Madras 1960, p. 154). Selon Parimēlazhakar, célèbre commentateur du Tirukūṇal, ce sont là les huit *guṇa* du "Seigneur" (kaṭavul). Cette interprétation est reprise par C. Maṇikkavācaka Mutaliyār dans son commentaire à Appar Tēvāram IV, 18, 8 (Dharmapuram, 1957, p. 162) ainsi que par V. C. Ceṅkalvarāya Piḷḷei (n. 22), p. 92, n..

En ce qui concerne la tradition āgamique sanscrite, elle distingue soigneusement entre les huit *siddhi* et les huit *guṇa* de Shiva (cf. par exemple, *Śaivāgamaparibhāṣāmañjari de Vedajñāna*, éd. Bruno Dagens, Pondicherry, 1979, p. 317 ss); les *siddhi* sont celles que reçoit le *sādhaka* lors de sa consécration et les *guṇa* sont les suivants: omniscience, omniprésence (*vibhūtvā*), pouvoir de créer le monde, pureté (*nirmalatva*), éternité, bienveillance universelle (*sarvānugrahatva*), souveraineté et puissance. — Cf. encore M. Winslow, *Tamil-English Dictionary*, 1862, nouvelle édition Wiesbaden 1977, p. 319s, qui offre encore une liste différente.

## SCRIPTURE AS THE WORD OF THE BUDDHA

JAMES P. McDERMOTT

Hindus have traditionally classified Indian systems of thought into two categories, namely the *nāstika* and the *āstika*. The *nāstika* (from *na* + *asti* = “it is not”) are atheists, unbelievers or, what is more important for our purposes, those who do not accept the authority of the *Vedas* and, hence, do not attempt to establish the authority of their own views on the basis of the *Vedas*.<sup>1</sup> Among the principal *nāstika* groups are the Buddhists. On more than one occasion in the Pāli Canon, the Buddha is reported to have warned his audience against misguided dependence on tradition (*paramparā*) or on the authority of oral “scriptural” collections (*piṭaka-sampadānena*).<sup>2</sup> Presumably in these passages the Buddha is objecting to blind adherence to the Brahmanic tradition.<sup>3</sup> In thus breaking with the *Vedas*, he came to treat what had been considered revealed, what the sages heard (*śrūti*), as mere hearsay (*itikirāya*). Scripture as a record of revealed and unquestioned truth has no place in the life and thought of the Buddha and his immediate disciples.

Yet even in the lifetime of the Buddha himself, there began to emerge within his monastic community oral “scripture” as a distinctive form and concept. Between his first sermon to the five ascetics at the Deer park near Vārāṇasī and his final words, the Buddha taught some forty years “as though he was wreathing a garland of flowers or composing a string of jewel beads.”<sup>4</sup> The words of his message (*dhmma*) are described “as lovely in the beginning, in the middle, and at the end; perfect in letter and in spirit; homogeneous, complete, and pure.”<sup>5</sup> So far as we know, during the actual course of his long ministry, no attempt was made to codify the wealth of material taught to his disciples by the Buddha. Nonetheless, oral collections (*sahitā*) of his teachings began to coalesce in his lifetime.<sup>6</sup> We find frequent references suggestive of two main types of such collections—one of monastic regulations, the *Vinaya* collection, and one of discourses, the *Dhamma* collection.<sup>7</sup>

Less frequent, and possibly later, are references to a third type of collection consisting of formularies (*mātikās*).

There is early evidence that this oral material was studied, committed to memory, recited, and subject to debate. As S. Dutt notes, the canonical *Mahāvagga* refers to an instance where the important ceremony marking the end of the rainy season retreat had to be cut short because the monks had stayed up most of the previous night in study and debate, some reciting the *Dhamma* and others the *Vinaya*.<sup>8</sup>

Strikingly, it is with reference to monastic discipline (*Vinaya*) that the process of crystalization of Buddhist oral “scripture” first becomes clear. Of the *Vinaya* texts in the Pāli Canon as presently constituted, the *Pātimokkha Sutta* can be safely considered the earliest composition.<sup>9</sup> This *sutta* derives from a set of disciplinary rules compiled for the guidance of monks and, eventually, nuns. Canonical evidence suggests its early liturgical use in the monastic community.

Chapter II of the *Mahāvagga* describes the institution of the fortnightly assembly (*uposatha*) which early became a characteristic practice of the Buddhist *Samgha*. At the *uposatha* the *Pātimokkha* rules were communally recited, and offences publicly confessed. Charles Prebish notes that the *Pātimokkha*

seems to have undergone at least three related stages of development—as a simple confession of faith recited by the monks and nuns at periodic intervals, as a bare monastic code employed as a device insuring proper monastic discipline, and as a monastic liturgy, representing a period of relatively high organization and structure within the *Samgha*.<sup>10</sup>

For purposes of the rainy season retreat and *uposatha* recitations, monks and nuns were divided into clearly defined colonies (*āvāsa*). All the monks and nuns in an *āvāsa* were required to participate in its recitations on the new and full moon days of the month.

Such recitations continue to be observed in Theravāda monastic communities to this day. The *uposatha* ceremonies have become the occasion for festivals during which the laity, especially women, will visit the monasteries to be instructed in the stories and values of their faith. These festivals were long one of the major vehicles for the transmission of scriptural traditions to the populace. Thus it is not unreasonable to see in the development of the *Pātimokkha* and its

liturgical recitation a primary step in the development of Buddhist scripture as form and concept.

The teachings of the Buddha survived his death as an oral tradition or, better, set of traditions, which were eventually collected and fixed in the canonical collections known as the *Tripiṭaka* (lit. “Three Baskets”; Pali: *Tipiṭaka*). Of the scriptural collections of the eighteen early schools of Buddhism—the so-called “Hīnayāna” schools—only the Pāli Canon of the Theravādins survives today in its entirety.<sup>11</sup>

The process through which the *Tipiṭaka* was canonized is described in the Theravada tradition in the accounts of what are spoken of as the first three great Buddhist councils. As George D. Bond has noted, these accounts make clear that “[f]rom ancient times to the present, Theravāda Buddhists have regarded the *Tipiṭaka* as ‘the Word of the Buddha.’ The authority and significance of the *Tipiṭaka* in Theravāda Buddhism derive from its being identified with the wisdom of the enlightened Buddha...”<sup>12</sup> In short, “Theravāda Buddhism considers the *Tipiṭaka* authoritative because it is the word of the Buddha.”<sup>13</sup> The complete Pāli Canon thus comes to be equated with the word of the Buddha. In the *Atthasālinī*, his commentary on the canonical *Dhammasaṅgani*, Buddhaghosa (5th century C.E.) maintains that altogether the sayings of the Buddha “form three treasures (*piṭakas*), five collections (*nikāyas*), nine limbs (*aṅgas*), and eighty-four thousand textual units (*khandhas*). How so? The sum total of the words of the Buddha are divided by way of treasures (*piṭaka*; lit. “basket”) into three parts: the *Vinaya*, the *Sutta*, and the *Abhidhamma*.”<sup>14</sup>

The emphasis on the authority of the word of the Buddha (*Buddha vacana*) is in spite of the fact, noted above,<sup>15</sup> that in the *Kālāma Sutta* (A I.188 ff) the Buddha warns his followers not to depend on mere tradition, the authority of (oral) religious texts, or the reputation and charisma of their teachers as the foundation for the understanding of the *dhamma*. Rather, one’s understanding of the truth should be founded on the intuitive wisdom arising from enlightened experience.<sup>16</sup> To adapt a nice distinction made by Cheever MacKenzie Brown in a different context, the *Buddha vacana* has authority not as revealed truth, but as revealing truth.<sup>17</sup> As we shall see,<sup>18</sup> the Buddhists might have saved themselves some rationaliza-

tion had they been able to maintain this distinction consistently, but a changing conception of the nature of the Buddha eventually led them in a different direction.

As George Bond notes,

later followers of the Buddha interpreted his Buddhahood in such a way that he received an exalted and authoritative status. As the universal Buddha, his teachings, Dhamma, were also regarded as authoritative since they were eternal truths. Thus, even though the Buddha had explicitly rejected the authority of scripture, the *Tipitaka* came to be authoritative because it was held to represent the earthly or historical form of the eternal Dhamma and was necessary for the life and conduct of the monastic order.<sup>19</sup>

As Bond notes elsewhere, though I would suggest that again this idea develops in precisely this form only among later followers of the Buddha, the

Theravada Buddhists do not view either the Buddha's teachings or the *Tipitaka* as historical revelation, however, because... the supreme truth manifested in these teachings exists above time; it has been made known by all the previous Buddhas and enlightened beings; and, at least in theory, human beings who follow the path to Nirvana can realize it even today.<sup>20</sup>

Once such an understanding of the universal Buddha and eternal *dhamma* had become operative, it became an easy step for Mahāyāna to recognize the authenticity and authority of an additional body of texts as having been promulgated by the Buddha, indeed by various Buddhas, even though these scriptures were unknown to earlier schools of Buddhism. These *sūtras*, Mahāyānists insisted, were equally to be regarded as the word of the Buddha. To doubt this was to fall into the trap of the tempter, as is implied in the *Aṣṭādaśasāhasrikā Prajñāparamitā Sūtra* (*Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra in 18,000 Lines*) where Māra is depicted as appearing in the guise of a *śramana* to tempt the *Bodhisattvas*, saying: "What have you heard, that is not the Buddha-word, that has not been taught by the fully enlightened Buddha. It is mere poetry. What I teach is the Buddha-word, that is as taught by the *Tathāgata*."<sup>21</sup>

Below the surface of this passage lies implicit the assumption that some had indeed gone so far as to deny that the Mahāyāna *sūtras* were, in fact, the word of the Buddha. Mahāyāna realized that its scriptures did not always appear on the surface fully compatible with those of the eighteen early schools, and further that it was open to the charge that its scriptures were but late comers to the scene.

But even within the Theravāda *Tipiṭaka* there were texts to which the rubric “word of the Buddha” seemed not so immediately applicable. Thus the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* (*Discourse on the Great Decease*) describes the death of the Buddha and accompanying events. The *Sutta Piṭaka* includes numerous discourses directly attributed to followers of the Buddha. Indeed, of the eighty-four thousand units of text comprising the whole of the Buddha-word by traditional reckoning, Ānanda tells Gopaka Moggallāna: “Eighty-two thousand from the Blessed One,/Two thousand from the monk Sāriputta—/eighty-four thousand *dhammas* (in all) have I learned.”<sup>22</sup> The *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā*, again canonical and formally counted under the rubric of the “*Buddha vacana*”, are anthologies of religious poems or psalms nonetheless directly attributed to various monks and nuns within the early order.

Perhaps more striking still is the case of the *Kathāvatthu*, or *Points of Controversy*, traditionally dated in its completed form to the time of the third council under Aśoka in the mid-third century B.C.E.<sup>23</sup> Written from the Theravada point of view, it is an apologetic text which describes and refutes a number of controversial views which had led to schism in the monastic order prior to and during the time of Aśoka. It is said to have been proclaimed by Moggalīputta Tissa. Nonetheless, in spite of this attribution, it too is listed among the works classified by Theravada as the word of the Buddha.

What then is to be made of those cases where, even for the Buddhists themselves, the word of the Buddha appears at first blush not to have been historically the word of the Buddha himself? More precisely, how have the Theravāda and Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition responded to this hermeneutical dilemma?

In his perceptive paper entitled “Two Theravada Traditions of the Meaning of ‘The Word of the Buddha’,”<sup>24</sup> George Bond notes that the designation has been applied by Theravādins in both the literal sense and in a more formal one. Bond’s essay gives a detailed analysis of what is perhaps the key passage in the development of the formal application, the *Mahāpadesa Sutta*.<sup>25</sup> Nonetheless, a précis of its key point seems in order. According to this *sutta* a rule (*vinaya*) or doctrine (*dhamma*) may be considered an authoritative teaching if it fulfills two criteria. First, it must have been heard directly—the text says “face to face”—from one of four possible sources of

authoritative teachings. These are: 1) the Buddha himself, 2) a complete order of monks led by a venerable elder, 3) a number of learned senior monks fully versed in the *dhamma*, the *vinaya*, and the scholastic summaries, and finally 4) “a single elder monk of wide learning, versed in the doctrines, one who knows Dhamma by heart, who knows Vinaya by heart, who knows the Summaries by heart.”<sup>26</sup> Second, once a teaching has been heard from one of these four types of authority, these words

are neither to be welcomed nor scorned, but without welcoming, without scorning them, the words and syllables thereof are to be closely scrutinized, laid beside Sutta and compared with Vinaya. Then, if when laid beside Sutta and compared with Vinaya, they lie along with Sutta and agree with Vinaya, then to this conclusion must ye come: Surely this is the word of the Exalted One, the Arahant, the Fully Enlightened One, and it was rightly taken...<sup>27</sup>

It is on the basis of these criteria, then, that the inclusion in the canon as word of the Buddha of such texts as the *Discourse on the Great Decease*, and *Thera-* and *Therī-gāthā*, the two thousand text units (*Khandhas*) heard from the mouth of Sāriputta, and the like, is to be justified.

To use the psalms of the *Thera-* and *Therī-gāthā* as an example, in the context of the *Tipiṭaka*, where they have been placed, their consistency with the *suttas* and the *vinaya* is patent. This being the case, Dhammapāla’s commentary provides the basis for the full application of the *mahāpadesa* criteria to the *gāthas*. He does this by stating the occasion for the utterance of each of the psalms and noting the spiritual qualifications of its composer. To cite several examples, of Subhuti Dhammapāla writes:

When he heard the Norm [*dhamma*], he found faith and left the world. Receiving ordination, he mastered two categories ... Developing insight on the basis of love *jhāna*, he won arahantship. And he teaching the Norm [*dhamma*] without distinctions or limitations...<sup>28</sup>

And of Mahākoṭṭhita:

Practicing insight from the day of his ordination he attained arahantship, together with thorough mastery of the form and meaning of the Norm.<sup>29</sup>

And of Mahākaccāna, to whom we return below:

He, with a party of seven, went to the Master, who taught him the Norm with such effect that at the end of the lesson, he with his seven attendants, were established in arahantship with thorough grasp of letter and meaning.<sup>30</sup>

Finally, in the “Introduction” to his commentary, Dhammapāla points to the authority of the *therī* (elder nun) psalmists as a group:

Renouncing and living virtuously, they received instruction from the Master and the Elders, and with toil and effort won realized Arahantship. And the psalms which they composed from time to time, in burst of enthusiasm and otherwise were afterwards by the Recensionists included in the Rehearsal, and arranged together.<sup>31</sup>

By ascribing each psalm in this way to an *arhat*, an enlightened one, Dhammapāla recognizes its value as enlightened word, *Buddha vacana*, the word of the Buddha, and hence its scriptural authenticity.

A more explicit example of the criteria of the *Mahāpadesa Sutta* in action occurs in the *Madhupiṇḍika Sutta*.<sup>32</sup> Here Mahākaccāna is presented as the outstanding interpreter of the Buddha’s teachings. A group of monks goes to him for an explanation of something they have heard from the Buddha, but found difficult to understand. With Mahākaccāna’s interpretation in mind, the monks then return to the Buddha to have its validity confirmed. The Buddha in turn expresses his complete approval, saying:

“For if you, monks, had questioned me as to this meaning, I too would have explained it precisely as it was explained by Kaccāna the Great. Indeed this is the exact meaning of that, and thus you should understand it.”<sup>33</sup>

In this instance the monks have clearly applied the criteria from the *Mahāpadesa Sutta*. They have heard the commentary from an authoritative source, “established in arahantship with thorough grasp of letter and meaning,”<sup>34</sup> in other words, “a monk of wide learning, versed in the doctrines, ... who knows the *dhamma* by heart.”<sup>35</sup> But they do not accept what he has to say at face value until they have confirmed that it corresponds with what is known to be the word of the Buddha. Since the correspondence is exact, what Mahākaccāna has taught is itself accepted as word of the Buddha, as authoritative and, hence, included in the Canon.

The implications of this principle are carried to their logical conclusion in an important passage from the *Āṅguttara Nikāya* where Sakka, the King of the *devas* (gods) is depicted as approaching the venerable monk Uttara to inquire about the authority for what he has been teaching, namely a discourse which to this point had been

“nowhere honored among the four companies, to wit: monks, nuns, and lay-disciples, both men and women.”<sup>36</sup> Sakka asks:

“But pray, sir, is this venerable Uttara’s own saying, or is it the word of the Exalted One, arahant, the fully awakened one?”

“Now, O Deva-King, I will give you an analogy, for it is by analogy that men of intelligence understand what is said.

Imagine, O King, a great heap of grain near some village or market-town, from which country folk carry away corn on pingoos or in baskets [*piṭaka*], in lap or hand. And if one should approach the folk and question them saying: ‘Whence bring you this corn?’ how would these folk, in explaining, best explain?”

“They would best explain the matter, sir, by saying: ‘We bring it from the great heap of grain.’ ”

“Even so, O King, whatsoever be well spoken, all that is the word of the Exalted One, arahant, the fully awakened One, wholly based thereon is both what we and others say!”<sup>37</sup>

The key idea here is that whatever accords with the *dhamma* is to be counted as the word of the Buddha, that is, as scriptural. This idea is echoed and elaborated on from a Mahayana perspective by Śāntideva in his compendium of Buddhist doctrine, the *Śikṣā Samuccaya*. There he cites a relevant passage from the *Adhyāśāyasaṃcodana Sūtra*:

“Moreover, O Maitreya, by four causes the word of the Buddhas may be recognized. What four! (1) O Maitreya, it refers to truth, not to untruth; (2) to the Law, not the not-Law; (3) it lessens sin, not increases it; (4) it shows the advantages of nirvana, not indicates those of continued re-birth; ...”<sup>38</sup>

And continuing from the same source:

“When some one [*sic*], O Maitreya, utters or shall utter a word endowed with these four qualities, the believing young men and women will produce the idea of Buddha, of Master; they will hear this Law as he preaches. Why? Anything, Maitreya, that is well said, is a word of Buddha. And any one [*sic*] who shall reject such utterances and say, ‘They are not spoken by Buddha,’ and produce disrespect towards them; such a hateful person does really reject all the utterances pronounced by all Buddhas; and having rejected the law, he will go to hell, on account of a deed which is by nature an injury to the Law.”<sup>39</sup>

In a similar vein, in a section of his *History of Buddhism* entitled “The Jewelry of Scripture,” Bu-ston defines the word of the Buddha as

the Word, which, being in close connection with the Doctrine, that forms its subject-matter, speaks of the work to be done, namely,—the rejection of all defilement in the three spheres of existence and of the result, which is the bliss

of Quiescence (*Nirvāṇa*); it is produced by the agency of Buddha, who is its principal determining cause.<sup>40</sup>

Bu-ston continues in a passage analyzing the varieties of the word of the Buddha:

From the point of view of the chief determining cause, the Word of Buddha is of three kinds, namely:—a. that delivered (by Buddha) personally, b. that, which is the result of Buddha's blessing (and is communicated by a *Ārāṇaka* or *Bodhisattva*), c. the passages, containing the expression of Buddhas [*sic*] will...<sup>41</sup>

Passages containing the expression of the Buddha's will are said to include "[t]he introduction (to a discourse), the conjunctive parts (of it) and the words of approval."<sup>42</sup>

In theory the view expressed in these passages from Bu-ston and Śāntideva, as well as at *A* IV.160-164, may be acceptable, but in practice it breaks down in the face of controversy, for then there is disagreement as to precisely what is consistent with *dhamma*. In crisis situations a different approach to authenticating scripture is needed.

A case in point concerns the *Points of Controversy*, first recited at the Aśokan council by Moggalīputta Tissa.<sup>43</sup> Theravādin consensus considered it canonical. But the Viṇaya school argued: "Was it not [first] settled by Tissa Moggalī's son, two hundred and eighteen years after the Buddha's Parinibbāna? Hence it is [merely] the word of his disciples. Reject it."<sup>44</sup> In the face of its attempted rejection, the great Buddhist commentator Buddhaghosa (4th or 5th century C.E.) provided the rationale for considering the *Points of Controversy* the word of the Buddha and, hence, canonical, while not denying the role of Tissa in its compilation:

When the Supreme Buddha ... came to the *Kathāvatthu*, he began with an eight-faced inquiry into the theory of the person ... in four questions each of two five-fold divisions and laid down a table of contents in a text not quite as long as one recital, to be adopted in all the discourses ... Thus, showing the eight aspects and their respective refutations, the table of contents has been laid down by the Teacher.

Now when he laid down the table of contents he foresaw that, two hundred and eighteen years after his death, Tissa, Moggalī's son, seated in the midst of one thousand bhikkhus, would elaborate the *Kathāvatthu* to the extent of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, bringing together five hundred orthodox and five hundred heterodox Suttas.

So Tissa ... expounded the book not by his own knowledge but according to the table of contents laid down, as well as by the method given, by the Teacher. Hence the entire book became the word of the Buddha.<sup>45</sup>

Striking in Buddhaghosa's treatment of this point is that he cites the *Madhupiṇḍika Suttanta* as a precedent, noting that the Buddha had provided the headings, or outline, for the discourse which were then elaborated on by Mahākaccāna in great detail.<sup>46</sup>

Before leaving Theravāda, comment should be made concerning the great commentator Buddhaghosa. His commentaries on the *Tipiṭaka* have been considered indispensable for the understanding of the Canon by scholars, western and Buddhist alike. His reading of the *Tipiṭaka* has long been the norm in Theravāda countries. But especially his *magnum opus*, the *Path of Purification* (*Visuddhimagga*) has come to occupy the status of virtual para-scripture in Theravāda. The *Path of Purification* is a masterful scholastic summary of all Theravāda doctrine which, along with the much earlier *Questions of King Milinda* (*Milindapañha*), ranks as one of the two most authoritative non-canonical writings in Theravāda. The *Cūlavamsa* relates that Buddhaghosa had gone to Śri Lanka to translate the Sinhalese commentaries into Pāli. The monastic officials there decided to test his qualifications for the task by requiring him to comment on two verses. The *Visuddhimagga* is his elaborate fulfillment of this task.

Several facts, apart from their authority, highlight the aptness of the designation of Buddhaghosa's works as para-scripture. The fifteenth century Burmese hagiography, the *Buddhaghosuppatti* describes his intentional birth from the deva-world in order to transcreate the Sinhalese commentaries in terms intentionally reminiscent of the Buddha's own final rebirth as Siddhartha Gautama.<sup>47</sup> The consonance of Buddhaghosa's writings with the word of the Buddha is stressed throughout the *Buddhaghosuppatti*. For example, a monastic official praises his completed work with the following verse: "The religion, the word of the most excellent Buddha is difficult of acquirement; by virtue of your translation we discern it easily."<sup>48</sup> Even Buddhaghosa's name, literally "the voice of the Buddha," suggests that what he utters is the *Buddha vacana*. In this vein the *Cūlavamsa* declares: "As his speech was profound like that of the Buddha he was called Buddhaghosa; for his speech (resounded) through the earth like (that of the) Buddha."<sup>49</sup>

Since Buddhaghosa spoke with the voice of enlightenment, it seemed only natural to assume his Buddhahood. Thus when he had

completed three copies of the *Visuddhimagga* and recited them for the gathered community, “then the community satisfied and exceedingly well pleased, cried again and again: ‘without doubt this is Metteyya.’”<sup>50</sup> Through this device of identifying Buddhaghosa with the future Buddha Metteyya (Skt. Maitreya), what had been recognized as the word of the Buddha in the formal sense comes to be considered word of the Buddha in the literal sense as well.

The pressures which at times existed to Sanskritize Buddhism can be seen in the *Buddhaghosuppatti* account of the final days of Buddhaghosa’s sojourn in Śrī Lanka. Having completed his self-appointed task, Buddhaghosa was preparing to reembark for India when a group disparaged him for knowing no Sanskrit. Hearing of their insults, he arranged the next day to deliver a discourse in Sanskrit, with spectacular effect.<sup>51</sup> The implication is that skill in Sanskrit had become necessary for the full authentication of his *dhamma*.

The development of the Sanskrit texts of schools like the Sarvāstivādins centuries before the time of Buddhaghosa is indicative of the longevity of these pressures. The height of their influence on Buddhist scripture can be seen in the important *Vaiṣṇava Sūtras* of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Although limitations of time and space prohibit a detailed discussion of this crucial matter at this point, it does seem germane to note at least that these texts represent the Sanskritization of Buddhism not just in the literary sense that they were composed in that language, but in the broader sense that they are infused throughout with the flavor of what has been termed the Sanskritic culture of India. This holds not only in the realm of doctrine and metaphysics, but also in the enriched imagery and cultic emphasis of these texts.

More directly to the point of this paper, I would suggest that the Mahāyāna *Sūtras* in India fit into a more Sanskritized concept of scripture and canon (or lack thereof) than does the Theravāda *Tipiṭaka*. Where I see the Theravāda *Tipiṭaka* as canonical scripture in more nearly the Western sense, the Mahāyāna texts are more open ended in scope. The *Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras*, for example, were open to virtually endless elaboration and then condensation to the point where they became *mantras*. A more ephemeral definition of what was to be considered authoritative seems to have been

operative in Mahāyāna as well. What was normative for one group at one time did not necessarily carry the same authority for other groups or at a different time. Even so far as our knowledge of the historical context of the Mahāyāna texts is concerned, the vagueness of what we can say is more akin to what we know of the Brahmanic/Hindu case than to the relative clarity provided by the Theravāda tradition.

From among the wealth of Mahāyāna materials, it remains briefly to consider the contributions of the *Perfection of Wisdom* (*Prajñāpāramitā*) literature and the *Lotus Sūtra* (*Saddharmaṣaṇḍarīka Sūtra*) to the main theme of this paper.<sup>52</sup>

To begin with the *Perfection of Wisdom in 25,000 Lines* (*Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*), which in many ways is typical of the various large *Perfection of Wisdom Scriptures*: As Edward Conze, its translator, notes, much of its introduction “is designed to establish the authority of the Sutra.”<sup>53</sup> A section on “Entrusting” well into the text has the same aim.<sup>54</sup> Its approach to this task is to build on the concept of the universal Buddha and eternal *dhamma* noted above.<sup>55</sup> The preaching of the *Perfection of Wisdom* is seen to be “valid independent of temporal or spatial circumstances, at all times and throughout the universe.”<sup>56</sup> Its authority derives from the fact that the *Sūtra* proceeds from the Buddha himself, although not in his human body, that is not from Siddhartha Gautama (563-483 B.C.E.). Instead, the *Sūtra* is said to have been preached by the Buddha in the glorified body which makes manifest his essential original nature. In elaborate detail the text describes the marvelous qualities of the Buddha, such as the divine aura of light which emanates from his presence and illuminates an endless number of parallel universes. It describes the glories of his enlightened predecessors, and puts his preaching in the spiritual succession of their wisdom. It describes the vast audience attentive to the Buddha’s word. All this is offered as a sign of his ability to teach the ultimate truth. All this is intended to argue for the acceptance of the *sūtra* as sacred scripture.<sup>57</sup>

Yet despite all this, there remained those who were not convinced that this was indeed the word of the *Tathāgata*, those for whom a connection with the historical Buddha remained a requisite criterion for the authentication of scripture. Thus, Tāranātha, the

great, late 16th to early 17th century, Tibetan Buddhist historian, in his *History of Buddhism in India*, notes that the adherents of “Hīnayāna” [Tāranātha’s term] consider the *Śatasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* (the *Perfection of Wisdom in 100,000 Lines*), a text of the same genre as the *Sūtra in 25,000 Lines*, to be apocryphal. He says they consider it the work of the great Mahāyāna scholar-saint, Nāgārjuna (variously dated early 2nd to 3rd century C.E.).<sup>58</sup> In fact, Nāgārjuna is generally recognized as the author of a mammoth commentary on the *Perfection of Wisdom in 25,000 Lines*. In any case, Nāgārjuna’s name became inseparably intertwined with the dual question of authorship and authority of the *Perfection of Wisdom* literature.

The problem was how the role of the Buddha and that of Nāgārjuna in the promulgation of this literature could both be maintained. Tāranātha provides the solution. The Buddha had, in fact, taught these scriptures during his lifetime. However, his audience had not been spiritually advanced, and his hearers (*śrāvakas*) had not understood them. Hence, in order to preserve these profound teachings until such time as his followers had advanced sufficiently along the path to be able to benefit from them, the Buddha put them into the hands of the serpent (*nāga*) kings and other supernatural beings for safe keeping. Some time after the reign of Emperor Kaniṣka in the second century C.E. a number of teachers appeared in India who had advanced sufficiently along the path to be able to understand these texts. Chief among these was Nāgārjuna, who is said to have obtained the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras* from the *nāga* king. According to the account, Nāgārjuna was led into the sea by the serpent king, who opened the “Treasury of the Seven Jewels” for him. There he was permitted to read the Mahāyāna scriptures, in which he said he found ten times as much wisdom as in the *Tipiṭaka*, the *Vedas*, and the secular literature combined. He brought back a box full of these newly revealed Mahāyāna scriptures with him, and made them known on earth. Among the texts which he brought back is specifically mentioned the *Perfection of Wisdom in 100,000 Lines*.<sup>59</sup>

A striking footnote is added to the story by the biography of Nāgārjuna as preserved in the Chinese translation of Kumārajīva.<sup>60</sup> There it is recorded that “100 years after his

death—apparently the time when the biography was written—he was worshipped as a Buddha at shrines dedicated to him in the states of South India.”<sup>61</sup>—a natural development for a man whose teachings had come to be identified with the word of the Buddha.

One of the texts quoted by Nāgārjuna in his writings, according to M. Winternitz, is the *Lotus*, or *Saddharmapūṇḍarīka Sūtra*.<sup>62</sup> As noted by Mark Ehman, the text of this Mahāyāna scripture

reveals several stages of compilation. The poetic portions are composed in mixed Sanskrit, while the prose portions are composed in relatively correct Sanskrit. Some passages of the sūtra may antedate the Christian era, but the entire text could not have been completed much before A.D. 200. The sūtra reflects the growing conflict between the Mahāyānists and Hīnayānists. The designation *mahāvaiṣṭya* (of great length) is ascribed to the sūtra, implying a process of adding to and embellishment...<sup>63</sup>

As in the *Perfection of Wisdom in 25,000 Lines*, the opening chapters of the *Lotus* are designed to establish the text’s authority. Again this is done by describing the universally illuminating rays emitted from the brows of the Buddha, ascribing the text to the Buddha himself, and relating his appearance in the world to that of his predecessors through a kind of spiritual genealogy.

For purposes of analysis, the text of the *Lotus* is usually divided into two parts, with the dividing line between chapters 14 and 15. The teaching of the first part is ascribed herein to the historical Buddha, while that in the second part derives from the Buddha in his transmundane form. Thus in chapter 16 the Buddha explains

that the commonly accepted notions about the Buddha’s life-span and teaching career have no ultimate truth, that the Buddha is in fact limitless in both time and space, assuming various forms in different ages and under different circumstances but all for one and the same purpose, namely, the salvation of the beings.<sup>64</sup>

The connection between the two parts of the text is made through the identification of the historical Buddha, that is Siddhartha Gautama, or Śākyamuni as he is called here, with the human form of the limitless Buddha. Thus, according to a modern Buddhist interpretation, “only through the teachings of Sakyamuni, who appeared in this world in obedience to the truth of the Original Buddha, can we understand that truth.”<sup>65</sup> This concept provides the apologetic basis for considering the *Lotus* at once to be historically rooted in the life of the Buddha, yet at the same time to transcend the limits of his life span.

Perhaps more striking still from our perspective is the way in which the *Lotus* provides the basis for turning head-over-heels the pattern we have noted in other cases of justifying as word of the Buddha apparently later utterances. Most basic to the *Lotus* is its concept of the Buddha's skill in means, whereby he adapts his message to the ability of his hearers. This idea is repeatedly communicated in the *Lotus* through such parables as the parables of the burning house,<sup>66</sup> the prodigal son,<sup>67</sup> and the guide and the magic city.<sup>68</sup> Thus the message given to the *śrāvakas* (hearers), that is to the followers of what the *Lotus* considers lesser forms of Buddhism (i.e. Hīnayāna), is recognized as an expedient, a device used by the Buddha to lure the less adept to the truth. There is no falsehood or deception involved when the Buddha teaches such diverse paths, even when the doctrines are not true in the ultimate sense; for the ultimate goal is the same, namely the salvation of all beings.<sup>69</sup> In short, in a nice turn about, instead of justifying its claim to represent *ipsissima verba*, the *Lotus* assumes this status *a priori* and, on this basis, puts the "Hīnayāna" on the defense by rationalizing its status—albeit on a lower level—as word of the Buddha. Thus, through the texts under consideration, the *Buddha vacana* continues to be recognized as scriptural and scripture identified as word of the Buddha (*Buddha vacana*). However, the intent of the phrase "*Buddha vacana*" tends over the course of time to shift from the literal sense, "the word of the Buddha," to the more inclusive "enlightened word"—both being acceptable translations of the Pāli.

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<sup>1</sup> Surendranath Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. I (Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 1963), pp. 67-68. Cf. *Manava-dharma-śāstra* 2.11, 4.30, and 8.22. An earlier version of this paper was prepared in conjunction with, and presented to, the N.E.H. Summer Seminar, "Scripture as Form and Concept", held at Harvard University, June-August, 1982 under the directorship of Prof. Wilfred Cantwell Smith. An abbreviated version was presented at the Eastern International Region meeting of the A.A.R., April 22, 1983, at Syracuse, N.Y.

<sup>2</sup> A I.189 and II.191. Cf. S II.115 and *Nidd*2 par. 151.

<sup>3</sup> See George Doherty Bond, *The Problem of Interpretation in Theravada Buddhism and Christianity*, a Northwestern University Ph.D. dissertation [1972] published on demand (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1973), pp. 51-53.

<sup>4</sup> *Asln* 18, as trans. by Maung Tin, *The Expositor*, vol. I, ed. and rev. by Mrs. Rhys Davids (London: Oxford U. P. for P.T.S., 1920), p. 22.

<sup>5</sup> *M* I.179; *Vin* I.35, 242; *D* I.12. Cf. Etienne Lamotte, *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indiens des origines à l'ère Saka*, Bibliothèque du Muséon, No. 43 (Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1958), p. 25.

<sup>6</sup> See E. W. Adikaram, *Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon* (Colombo: M. D. Gunasena and Co., 1946), p. 24.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, *Vin* IV.15.4; cf. *D* II.154; *A* II.169-170.

<sup>8</sup> S. Dutt, "Buddhist Education," Chap. VIII of P. V. Bapat, ed. *2500 Years of Buddhism* (Delhi: The Publications Division, Ministry of Publications and Broadcasting, Government of India; 1959 reprint of 1955 ed.), p. 179. See *Vin* I.169 (*Mahāvagga* IV.15.4).

<sup>9</sup> Its language appears older than that of the *Nikāyas*, and references are made to the text in the *Majjhima* and *Anguttara*, according to Nalinaksha Dutt, "Buddha's Disciplinary Code," Chap. II of Bapat, *2500 Years*, p. 163. Dutt here refers to the *Pātimokkha* as a "manual", a form which it comes to take only much later in its history.

<sup>10</sup> Charles S. Prebish, *Buddhism: A Modern Perspective* (University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State U. P., 1975), pp. 49-50.

<sup>11</sup> Theravāda arises from a split in the Vibhajjavādin school, which in turn is a splinter from the still earlier Sthaviras.

<sup>12</sup> George D. Bond, "History and Interpretation in Theravāda Buddhism and Christianity," *Encounter* [Indianapolis: Christian Theological Seminary], Vol. 39 (Aut. 1978), p. 426.

<sup>13</sup> Bond, *Problem of Interpretation*, p. 51.

<sup>14</sup> *Asln* 18. My translation.

<sup>15</sup> *Supra*.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Bond, *Problem of Interpretation*, pp. 51 ff and summary, p. 92.

<sup>17</sup> See Cheever MacKenzie Brown, *God as Mother: A Feminine Theology in India* (Hartford: Claude Stark, 1974), p. 9. The original context of Brown's distinction is between *śrūti* as revealed truth and *smṛti* as revealing truth.

<sup>18</sup> *Infra*.

<sup>19</sup> Bond, *Problem of Interpretation*, p. 92.

<sup>20</sup> Bond, "History and Interpretation," pp. 426-427.

<sup>21</sup> *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* IV.8.1.18, trans. Edward Conze, *The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom with the Divisions of the Abhisamayālaṅkāra* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1975), p. 392.

<sup>22</sup> *Asln* 27. My translation.

<sup>23</sup> See below.

<sup>24</sup> George D. Bond, "Two Theravada Traditions of the Meaning of 'The word of the Buddha'," *Maha Bodhi Journal*, Vol. 83, no. 10 (1975), pp. 402-413.

<sup>25</sup> *A* II.167 ff = *D* II. 123 ff. See also Etienne Lamotte, "La Critique d'Authenticité dans le Bouddhisme," *India Antiqua: A Volume of Oriental Studies Presented by His Friends to Jean Phillippe Vogel, C.I.E.*, Kern Institute [Instituut Kern] (Leyden: E. J. Brill, 1947), pp. 213-222.

<sup>26</sup> *A* II.169, as trans. by F. L. Woodward, *The Book of the Gradual Sayings*, Vol. II (London: Oxford U. P. for P.T.S., 1933), p. 176.

<sup>27</sup> *A* II.170 = *Gradual Sayings*, Vol. II, p. 177.

<sup>28</sup> Dhammapāla, *ThagA* as trans. by Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Psalm of the Early Buddhists: II.—Psalm of Brethren* (London: Henry Frowde, Oxford U. P. for P.T.S., 1909), p. 4.

<sup>29</sup> Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Psalm*, Vol. II, p. 6.

<sup>30</sup> Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Psalm*, Vol. II, p. 238.

<sup>31</sup> Dhammapāla, *ThigA*, trans. by Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Psalm of the Early Buddhists: I.—Psalm of the Sisters* (London: Henry Frowde, Oxford U. P. for P.T.S., 1913), pp. 7-8. Note with reference to both *Thag* and *Thig* the problem of authorship. Not all verses were written by the Elders. This fact was recognized even by Dhammapāla. On this, see K. R. Norman, *The Elders' Verses I: Theragāthā* (London: Luzac for P.T.S., 1969), pp. xix-xxiii.

<sup>32</sup> See *M I.108 ff.* Cf. Bond, *Problem of Interpretation*, p. 98.

<sup>33</sup> *M I. 113-114*, as trans. by Isaline Blew Horner, *Majjhimanikaya, The Collection of Middle Length Sayings*, 3 vols. (London: Luzac for P.T.S., 1954-1959), Vol. I, p. 147.

<sup>34</sup> Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Psalm*, Vol. II, p. 238.

<sup>35</sup> *A II.169*.

<sup>36</sup> *A IV.160-164*. The passage quoted is as trans. by E. M. Hare, *The Book of Gradual Sayings (Anguttara-Nikāya)*, Vol. IV (London: Luzac for P.T.S., 1935), p. 112.

<sup>37</sup> Hare, *Gradual Sayings*, Vol. IV, pp. 111-112. Cf. Bond, *Problem of Interpretation*, p. 81.

<sup>38</sup> Śāntideva, *Śikṣā-Samuccaya: A Compendium of Buddhist Doctrine*, I.15, as trans. by Cecil Bendall and W. H. D. Rouse (2nd ed.; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1981 reprint of 1971 edition), p. 17.

<sup>39</sup> Śāntideva, *Śikṣā-Samuccaya*, I.15, trans. Bendall and Rouse, p. 17.

<sup>40</sup> Bu-ston, *History of Buddhism (Chos-hbyung)*, trans. Dr. E. Obermiller; *Materialien zur Kunde des Buddhismus*, 18. Heft, herausgegeben von Dr. M. Walleser (Heidelberg: O. Harrasowitz, 1931), p. 24.

<sup>41</sup> Bu-ston, *History*, p. 40.

<sup>42</sup> Bu-ston, *History*, p. 41.

<sup>43</sup> See above.

<sup>44</sup> Buddhaghosa, *Asln 3*, trans. Maung Tin and Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Expositor*, Vol. I, p. 5.

<sup>45</sup> *Asln 4-5 = Expositor*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>46</sup> *Asln 5 = Expositor*, p. 7.

<sup>47</sup> Mahāmaṅgala, *Buddhaghosuppatti; or the Historical Romance of the Rise and Career of Buddhaghosa*, ed. and trans. by James Gray (London: Luzac, 1892), [The Pāli text and English translation were published in the same volume, but with pages numbered separately.] Pāli text, pp. 38-39; trans. p. 5. This is Chapter 1.

<sup>48</sup> *Buddhaghosuppatti*, chapter 7: Pāli, p. 60; Gray trans. p. 28. The Pāli reads: "Sāsanaṃ nāma dullabhaṃ Buddhaseṭṭhassa bhāsitaṃ/parivattānubhavena tam passāma yathāsukhaṃ.

<sup>49</sup> *Cūlavamsa 37:224*, as trans. by Mrs. C. Mabel Rickmers from the German translation of Wilhelm Geiger, *Cūlavamsa, Being the More Recent Part of the Mahāvamsa*, Part I (Colombo: Ceylon Government Information Department, 1953), p. 24.

<sup>50</sup> *Cūlavamsa 37:242-243* as trans. Rickmers/Geiger, Part I, p. 26. The corresponding passage in the *Buddhaghosuppatti*, Chapter 8, Pāli text, p. 66; Gray trans., p. 35 does not go so far as the *Cūlavamsa* in this respect. It rather declares it inevitable that when Metteyya does appear, Buddhaghosa will be recognized as his foremost disciple.

<sup>51</sup> *Buddhaghosuppatti*, Chap. 8, Pāli text, pp. 63-67; Gray trans., pp. 27-31.

<sup>52</sup> For a discussion of inspired speech (*pratibhā*) in the *Aśtasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* and the *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtras*, see Graeme MacQueen, "Inspired Speech in Early Mahāyāna Buddhism," Part II, *Religion*, Vol. XII (Jan., 1982), pp. 49-65. MacQueen distinguishes between inspired speech in the *Aśtasāhasrikā* as non-theistic and in the *Lotus* as theistic.

<sup>53</sup> Edward Conze, *The Large Sūtra on Perfect Wisdom with the Divisions of the Abhisamayālaṅkāra* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1975), p. 1.

<sup>54</sup> See P 447-450, Conze trans. *Large Sūtra*, pp. 482-487.

<sup>55</sup> *Supra*.

<sup>56</sup> Conze, *Large Sūtra*, p. 1, summarizing its "Introduction."

<sup>57</sup> See Conze, *Large Sūtra*, pp. 1-2 and trans. pp. 37-44 = p. 1-17.

<sup>58</sup> Tāranātha, *History of Buddhism in India*, as cited by Maurice [sic] Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, Vol. II (Calcutta: University of Calcutta Press, 1933), pp. 341-342.

<sup>59</sup> Tāranātha's *Geschichte der Buddhismus in Indien*, trans. Anton Schiefner (St. Petersburg: Commissionaire der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1869), pp. 61-66. Cf. the version in Bu-ston, *History of Buddhism (Chos-hbyung) II. Part: The History of Buddhism in India and Tibet*; Materialien zur Kunde des Buddhismus, herausgegeben von M. Walleiser, 19. Heft), trans. E. Obermiller (Heidelberg: O. Harrassowitz, 1932), pp. 122-125.

<sup>60</sup> *Taisho* 2047.

<sup>61</sup> Cited in Richard H. Robinson, *Early Mādhyamika in India and China* (Madison, Milwaukee, and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967), p. 22.

<sup>62</sup> Winternitz, *History*, Vol. II, p. 304.

<sup>63</sup> Mark A. Ehman, Chap. 19, "The Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra," in Prebish, *Buddhism: A Modern Perspective*, p. 102.

<sup>64</sup> As summarized by Leon Hurvitz in his Preface to *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma* (New York: Columbia U. P., 1976), p. xiv.

<sup>65</sup> Nikkyo Niwano, *Buddhism for Today: A Modern Interpretation of the Threefold Lotus Sutra* (Tokyo: Kosei Publishing Co., 1976), pp. xxv-xxvi.

<sup>66</sup> *Lotus*, Chap. III.

<sup>67</sup> *Lotus*, Chap. IV.

<sup>68</sup> *Lotus*, Chap. VII.

<sup>69</sup> See, for example, *Lotus*, Chap. III, Hurvitz, *Scripture of the Lotus*, p. 63.

## WHY GURUS ARE HEAVY\*

DAVID GORDON WHITE

In his renowned essay, "Religion as a cultural system,"<sup>1</sup> Clifford Geertz speaks of symbols as being unique to humans in the sense that, in any given culture, they may serve at once as models *of* and models *for* both a meaningful understanding (a world view) of reality and a pattern of thought and behavior (an ethos), which mutually reinforce one another. Drawing on random existence, a culture recognizes, aesthetically, in given social, linguistic, natural, etc, objects, forms, processes and concepts, various congruencies with its own received understanding of itself; and through the manipulation and integration of the same it is able to evoke anew that same (symbolic) understanding. In this way a culture recognizes meaning in being—without which existence would be intolerable—through intersubjective extrinsic sources of information which serve as templates for cultural patterns which shape public behavior. Culture is thus process, in which a people exists as a "being-interpreted"<sup>2</sup> through the totality of cultural signifiers (appropriated from the world) at its disposal, even as it interprets itself and its world. We are what we eat, but tastes change.

There are many ways of interpreting oneself through one's world, of recognizing a basic congruence between particular lifestyle and a specific (if implicit) metaphysics. Principal among these are a belief system and a system of ritual practice, which are inseparable as they are informed by, and exist in a relation of process with, a set of symbols common to both. In religious practice, as in performance, one *interprets* a role which is based upon and enriches the belief system which makes that interpretation meaningful. There would be no need for a ritual interpretation if there were nothing to interpret, but there would be nothing if there were no interpretation of it. "In plastic drama, men attain their faith as they portray it."<sup>3</sup>

A symbol system thus sanctions given patterns of conceptualization and behavior (an ethos) by recognizing and reenacting through

them a vision of the way things really are (a world view). In order for these two modalities to reinforce each other, to serve as templates for each other, it is necessary that their constituent parts adhere to the internal logic of the symbol system in which they are situated. A symbol system must in some way—according to the physical, social, cultural, linguistic, religious, etc. matrix in which it operates—be efficient; and as it must be efficient over time and through change, it must be resilient and adaptable.

One means to understanding the resilience of “successful” symbol systems may be found in the concept of “key symbols,” as developed by Sherry Ortner.<sup>4</sup> Ortner derives a schema for the interplay of what she terms “summarizing symbols”<sup>5</sup> and “elaborating symbols,”<sup>6</sup> with the latter category being divided into “root metaphor” and “key scenario.”<sup>7</sup> This understanding of the potentialities of symbol systems to associate “vertically”, “horizontally”, “qualitatively”, “quantitatively”, etc. through ritual orientation and belief orientation is useful to a comprehension of a system’s flexibility. Furthermore—and this is Ortner’s explicit intention in her article—such a schematic understanding of the dynamics of a symbol system is very useful to their study.

A restatement of Ortner’s categories may be effected by substituting for “summarizing symbol” the concept of *hierarchical system*, for “elaborating symbol” that of *system of correspondences*, for “root metaphor” *belief system*, and for “key scenario” *ritual system*. While I wish to retain the values Ortner assigns to these concepts, I wish to employ the alternative terminology in cases where such lends itself better to the systems I intend to investigate, as will be shown. At the same time, I wish to maintain Geertz’ insight on the mutual reinforcement of ethos and world view through a culture’s self-interpretation in its belief and ritual systems.

The immediate object of this study is to be Hindu alchemy (*rasāyana*),<sup>8</sup> as it constitutes a belief system and a ritual system, both as it is located within a broader hierarchical system and as it stands in correspondence with other related hierarchical systems. As alchemy today is nearly the “dead science” in India that it is in the west, this will be, of necessity, a textual study. The text upon which I will rely most heavily here is the *Rasārṇavam* (“The Ocean of Rasa”),<sup>9</sup> a twelfth century text which is generally seen as being the

earliest “complete” Hindu treatise on alchemy, of which most subsequent texts were little more than restatements. In addition to this primary source, I will use other texts of the alchemical tradition to the extent that such serve to further elucidate points made in the *Rasārṇavam*. I will also draw upon various sectarian sources, generally those of the same period, particularly those of the *Nāth paṇth*, to illustrate correspondences between the alchemical world view and ethos and those of yoga, Tantra and devotional Śaivism.

I intend to develop my analysis in the following manner: 1) to sketch the cultural and conceptual context of the Hindu alchemical tradition as one of a system of hierarchies; 2) to show how the alchemical tradition drew explicit correspondences between itself and the broader hierarchal (as the mythic) matrix; 3) to point out correspondences between certain aspects of yogic, Tantric and devotional Śaivite traditions and alchemy, as all four hierarchized systems interpenetrated one another within the broader hierarchical context, and 4) to discuss the “innovations” realized in these corresponding systems, even as they drew upon the broader “sedimented” tradition, which in turn influenced the broader tradition in such a way that, through the use of a new “key scenario,” a new ethos came into being which nevertheless rested upon an unchanged world view possessed of relatively unchanged “root metaphors.”

Implicit to the Indian world view, from the earliest traditions down to the present, has been an understanding of reality as being ordered hierarchically with correspondences existing between different or “parallel” hierarchical orderings. This is present in nearly every Indian realm of thought and practice, from the correspondences between the hierarchized social orders (*varṇas*) and cosmic epochs (*yugas*) to those between the senses (*indriyas*) and the elements (*bhūtas*). The same understanding is inherent to the concepts of the hierarchically ordered *guṇas*, the aims of life (*puruṣārthas*), the stages of life (*āśramas*), the arrangement of the concentric islands (*dvīpas*) of the earthly disc around the central axis of Mt. Meru, the vertical arrangement of heaven, midspace, earth and the subterranean worlds, the planets, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

Such systems of hierarchies and correspondences exist in ritual practice as well as in conceptual systems. The *varṇa* system, by

which social relations and interactions are ordered in a ritual manner, has its origins in the sacrifice of the Puruṣa. To this we might add the homologization of the parts of the body of the *Aśvamedha* horse with the physical and divine universe, or the naming of each of the bricks of the Vedic sacrificial altar (*vedi*) such that the totality of the five-layered bricks stood for the whole hierarchized universal order.

Essential to these corresponding systems of hierarchies are the “Neoplatonist” concepts of emanation or penetration (*vyāpana*) and participation or absorption (*laya*). In each hierarchical system, that which is superior penetrates (but cannot be penetrated by) and is capable of absorbing (but cannot be absorbed by) that which is inferior to it. Such hierarchical ordering is ultimately rooted in an understanding of cosmogony by which an original being or essence creates from itself, through emanation, something slightly different from itself which is so by virtue of the fact that it is less essential or original than the original essence from which it emanates—and so on, through a chain of emanations to the less and less essential, until all that has been created is located in the hierarchy.<sup>10</sup> By the same token, but in reverse order, that which is closer to the original essence i.e. more subtle (*sūkṣma*) is capable of (re-)absorbing that which is an emanation of itself i.e. more gross (*sthūla*), as in the cosmic dissolution or reabsorption (*pralaya*), such that the whole may be seen as a system capable of telescoping outward from or inward back into its essentially and cosmically original form.<sup>11</sup>

In India, this original uncreated essence is alternately called Brahman, Puruṣa, Paramēśvara, etc., according to different sectarian traditions. This essence is conceived in the *Puruṣa Sūkta*<sup>12</sup> as a cosmic man (*ṣpuruṣa*) possessed of 1000 heads, eyes, and feet, whose body extends beyond the bounds of the universe by a distance of ten digits. In the same vein, the words for creation, existence and dissolution are themselves indicative of Indian understandings of being: Creation is *sṛṣṭi* “surging, emission”; existence is *saṃsāra* “flowing together with”; and dissolution is *pralaya* “reabsorption.” In this way, the Brahman, Puruṣa, etc. is seen to be that essence from which all is emitted, with which all flows, and into which all is ultimately reabsorbed. When hierarchy is informed by cosmogony, a temporal element is introduced, which will be discussed later.

The understanding of reality as a hierarchized system of correspondences emanating from and participating in an original essence, may be described through the metaphor of a tree, in which one hierarchy or element of a hierarchy may stand analogically for several other “parallel” hierarchies or elements. If one were to picture parallel hierarchies as branches growing outward from a single trunk (the universal, original essence), the correspondences would be seen as cross-sections of a number of those branches such that the hierarchical element signified by a point ten feet out from the main trunk on branch “a” would have as its corresponding hierarchical elements those points at the same distance from the main trunk on branches “b”, “c”, “d”, etc. Thus the four yugas may be analogized with the four varṇas, or, as in the Sāṅkhyan system, the five elements may be analogized with the five senses and the five subtle elements (*tanmātras*),<sup>13</sup> even as they stand in a hierarchical relationship with one another.

As with Neoplatonist thought, man is conceived in these Indian systems as being at the midpoint of, and thus as the microcosm for, all of creation. He lies midway between the lower creatures, plants and nonliving matter on the one hand (the *tamasic*), and the divine hierarchies and subtle beings on the other (the *sattvic*). But, more important than this, man is seen as possessing an individual soul or spirit (*ātman*)—at least since the time of the Upaniṣads—which is a microcosm for the universal Brahman, Puruṣa, etc. Just as the Brahman is the hub of the cosmic round of creation, the Meru axis of the universe, so man’s *ātman* is at the center of his body.

The *ātman* is also that which gives life to and sustains the body, and that upon the departure of which the body dies (to have its parts reabsorbed into the five elements: *pañcatvaṃ gamanam*, and ultimately into the universal essence of which all matter and form is an emanation). In the Sāṅkhyan system, individual souls proceed from the universal soul and are *multiple*, as are the bodies in which they take incarnation.<sup>14</sup> This concept is important to the understanding of yogic, Tantric and alchemical systems, as will be shown below. Furthermore, as will be seen particularly in the case of yoga, the human body, with its hierarchically ordered constituent parts, is directly analogous to the Egg of Brahmā (*Brahmāṇḍa*) with its concentric sets of islands ringing the central axis of Mt. Meru and its vertically ordered *lokas*.

The alchemical, yogic and Tantric traditions which will be developed in this study grew out of, and explicitly situated themselves, for the most part, in the Śaivite traditions which existed in northern India in the medieval period. These traditions (as the Kaulas, Siddhas, Kāpālikas, Śāktas, etc.) may be seen as corresponding to the Sāṅkhyan system in many ways, with the impersonal Puruṣa, and its primary emanation *Prakṛti* ("Nature," with which it stands throughout all of her secondary emanations) being deified as the anthropomorphic gods *Śiva* and *Śakti* (or some other form of the goddess). Whereas in "dualist" Sāṅkhya, the male Puruṣa emanates into the female *Prakṛti*, and is thenceforth separated from although present with her, in Śaivite cosmogony it is an "androgynous" form of *Śiva* (*Sadāśiva*, *Paramēśvara*) who emanates into male (*Śiva*) and female (*Śakti*) "hypostases" with *Śiva* being cosmogonically and ontologically precedent to *Śakti*. Furthermore, where the Sāṅkhyan system conceives of all of the hierarchies of being as emanating from *prakṛti* (into the *bhūtādi*, etc.<sup>15</sup>), Śaivism understands all of the material world to be (an emanation of) the body of the goddess. In both cases, the *sthūla* (*prakṛti*, *Śakti* and all of the material world) is penetrated by the *sūkṣma* (Puruṣa, *Śiva*). In the same way, just as all is ultimately reabsorbed into the Puruṣa in Sāṅkhya, so all is reabsorbed into the essential *Śiva* in the *pralaya*. Only in the Śaivite system, however, is all of being penetrated "directly" by the universal essence, *Sadāśiva*—undoubtedly a borrowing from Vedāntic thought.

In this comparison of the Śaivite and Sāṅkhyan traditions, one last "wrinkle" of the former upon the latter must be mentioned: the concept of the *sexualized* universe.<sup>16</sup> Whereas in Sāṅkhya the genders of the sources of creation are not particularly stressed, in Śaivism creation is explicitly sexual (except when *Śiva* is portrayed as a *yogin*). As such, creation, existence and dissolution are alternately conceived as being the eternal dance or orgasm of *Śiva* and *Śakti*. When creation is perceived as sexual, it is from the emission of a drop of *Śiva*'s seed (*bindu*) into *Śakti* (who is the world) that all of being emanates. Both Śaivite understandings of creation are schematically portrayed in the *Śrī Cakra* yantra. In this system, in which no being does not bear a sexual valence, all interactions between beings are understood as being, in some way, sexual. As

such, every interaction in the universe is an emanation of the primal interaction of Śiva and Śakti, or, more explicitly, the penetration (vyāpana) of Śiva into Śakti or the reabsorption (laya) of Śakti into Śiva.<sup>17</sup>

The Hindu alchemical tradition possibly arose, along with Tantrism and numerous yogic traditions, in the Himalayas and Vindhyas, in a swathe of mountains extending from Afghanistan and Baluchistan in the west to Assam in the east. This is known in the alchemical case from the descriptions of the places in which various elements were to be found, and in the fact that many such elements (as cinnabar) only exist in these mountainous regions. In the Tantric and yogic contexts, it was in the same regions that the pilgrimage sites (as the *Śākta pīṭhas*)<sup>18</sup> peculiar to the various sects were to be found. In both cases, textual traditions date from about the tenth century onwards. Preceding the Hindu traditions of alchemy, Tantra and *tīrthas* in these regions were analogous Buddhist traditions, which date from the fourth century, or perhaps earlier. In addition to the Buddhist substrata, these Hindu traditions also drew upon earlier Hindu *Āyurveda* (of which one branch, that of “rejuvenation,” was termed *Rasāyana*),<sup>19</sup> and quite possibly upon indigenous vegetation cults and shamanic traditions in which “magical” powers were important.<sup>20</sup>

The hierarchical model of *rasāyana*, as a cultural system with a world view based upon that of Śaivism, is the element *mercury*,<sup>21</sup> which is variously known as *pārada* (“that which gives transcendence”), *rasa* (“essence,” etc.<sup>22</sup>), *rasendra* (“the lord of essences”), and *sūta* (“that which engenders”). The *Rasataraṃgiṇī*<sup>23</sup> adds that all the names of Śiva are also names for mercury. The identification of mercury with Śiva is made even more explicit in the *Rasārṇavam*,<sup>24</sup> in which Bhairava (= Śiva)<sup>25</sup> says: “This mercury is the same as me; it is integral to all of my body. My body is *rasa*, thus it should be called ‘*rasa*’.” Even more explicit, and more essential to an understanding of *rasāyana*, is the equating, in every alchemical text, of mercury with the seed of Śiva.<sup>26</sup> The *Rasaratnasamucchaya* also gives an account of the origin of mercury, drawing on the Purāṇic myth of the birth of Skanda:<sup>27</sup>

Once while Śiva and Parvatī were indulging in amorous sport in the Himalaya, the gods came to them out of fear of the asura Tāraka. Surprised

in the act of intercourse, Śiva ejaculated into his own hand. Ashamed of this, he placed that seed into the mouth of Agni (i.e. offered it as an oblation into the fire). Because of its *tejas*, Agni could not hold that seed in his mouth. He spit it into the Ganges, for whom it was unbearable as well. Her waves pushed it to her shores, which is why one attains *siddhis* on the banks of the Ganges. That seed was spread throughout the world, where it remains in the form of mercury. It is especially concentrated in five wells of mercury deep in the earth.

The same text later refers to the means by which mercury spread from its wells—by pursuing women on horseback!—into other parts of the world, particularly in the mountains of *Dārada*- (= cin-nabar)-*deśa*.<sup>28</sup>

In this way, the seed of Śiva penetrates through all of existence in the form of mercury, just as the Brahman penetrates into everything through emanation. Furthermore, the Ganges and the earth are to be seen as the female (Śakti) counterpart of Śiva, in a sexualized universe.

Just as mercury is the particular element which stands for the essence of Śiva, so there is a particular element which signifies the essence of Śakti, which is sulphur.<sup>29</sup> As with mercury, sulphur too has a myth of origins:<sup>30</sup>

Once, while the goddess was playing in the Ocean of Milk with the Vidyadhāras and Apsarases, some blood issued from her. That blood was extremely fragrant and delightful. Her blood stained her garments, so she left them on the shore and bathed to cleanse herself. When she returned to the city, her garment, which she had left behind on shore was carried into the middle of the Ocean of Milk by its waves. In the churning of that ocean, that blood rose together with the *amṛta*. All the gods and Dānavas were pleased by the goddess's odor (*gandha*) in her blood. Thus all the gods and Dānavas said, "Let this be called *Gandhaka* ("fragrant" = sulphur). Let this be used for the calcination and fixation of mercury. May those qualities that exist in mercury also be found here in the sulphur." Thus it is called *gandhaka* on earth.

The sexual essences of Śiva and Śakti exist in the mineral world in the form of mercury and sulphur, which are, not surprisingly, the two elements which are the most essential to alchemical practices. Thus every alchemical operation is a reenactment of the sexual union of Śiva and Śakti, and, as such, as in the case of Tantric sexual practices, constitutes a ritual act. And, as with Tantra, such ritual practices were also devotional (*bhakti*).

Following the opening devotional invocation of the *Rasārṇavam*, there is a description of the peak of Mt. Kailāsa, the abode of Śiva,

which is described as a fairyland of vegetal life, and a storehouse of minerals, metals and precious stones. It is in this setting, an alchemical vision of paradise, that the whole of the narrative, presented in the form of a dialogue between Parvatī and Bhairava, takes place. There, once the aims of Rasāyana have been discussed, Bhairava immediately explains the usefulness of taking *darśana* of mercury, which is his body.<sup>32</sup> Failure to worship mercury or the insulting of mercury, results in millions of rebirths into bodies of base creatures. In addition to mercury, the alchemist must worship his *guru* (which most literally means “heavy” in Sanskrit), as in yoga and Tantra, if any of his works are to be successful.

A *Rasaliṅgam*, made of mercury, gold and other elements, is to be established in the center of the alchemist’s laboratory, and protected by the lords of the cardinal directions (*dikpālas*).<sup>32</sup> In yogic practice, which must accompany the alchemical procedures, one is to meditate upon *Rasabhairava* in union with the goddess, and mentally construct the whole of his body, in which each of his body parts stand for different forms of Śiva. This body is to be conceived as being the source of, but subtler than, the three *guṇas*, the five elements, etc.<sup>33</sup> Every alchemical operation (*saṃskāra*)<sup>34</sup> is seen as a form of devotion, both a reenactment of the cosmic process initiated by Śiva and Śakti, and an offering to them. In the latter case, prescriptions are given concerning what portions of the total offering are to be given to various secondary gods and alchemical gurus.<sup>35</sup>

In addition to its Śaivite cosmogonic and world views, ritual practices and belief system, rasāyana is also possessed of a cosmology, which is portrayed in terms of the alchemist’s laboratory as microcosm. As has already been stated, the laboratory has the *Rasaliṅgam* at its center, with the *dikpālas* at its cardinal points. In addition to these beings, the basic layout of the chemicals, equipment and other substances constitute a reproduction of the Purāṇic Śaivite universe:<sup>36</sup> Herbs are to be placed in the eastern (*Indra*; associated with the herb *par excellence*, *soma*) quarter of the laboratory; distilling instruments are to be placed to the southeast (*Agni*; fire); “metal-killing” chemicals to the south (*Yama*; god of death); grinding tools to the southwest (*Nirṛti*): who

“grinds” the sinful with his club); liquifying instruments to the west (*Vāruṇa*; god of the waters); bellows to the northwest (*Vāyu*; wind); coloring agents to the north (*Kubera*; god of wealth); and transmuting elements (including mercury) to the northeast (*Īśāna*; a form of Śiva). In this way, the alchemist, situated at the center of the universe, “attains his faith as he portrays it,” participating in the world-creating godhead of Śiva and Śakti by worshipping them through ritual practice by means of which, as will be seen, he reintegrates the universe into its most subtle essences just as does Śiva in the pralaya, the cosmic reabsorption.

The instruments and apparatuses which the alchemist uses in his work are called *yantras*, the same term as is used for the schematic diagram of the universe employed in meditation in order to better concentrate. The word *yantra* has for its verbal root the element  $\sqrt{yam}$ , which means “to control, subdue.” Principal among the *mantras* which are necessary to the successful performance of alchemical operations is the *Rasāṅkuśa* (“the elephant hook of rasa”) mantra. This too is understood in the sense of subduing, as mercury in its liquid form is, like Śiva’s seed, highly volatile, and like an elephant in rut, must be brought under control in order to be used in further processes: “Just as he who attempts to mount a rutting elephant in the forest without a hook, so it is with he who tries to obtain mercury without the knowledge of the *Rasāṅkuśa* mantra: he becomes exhausted.”<sup>37</sup>

The practice of alchemy is divisible into two basic steps. The first is to gain control of the essence of Śiva (mercury) by which the alchemist himself becomes like Śiva, and the second is to use those “powers of Śiva” upon the world to reintegrate the gross elements of the universe into their most subtle and powerful “stages.” Alchemy thus entails the manipulation of nature or the world, for the sake of controlling it and returning it to a previous and more pristine state. This has surprising theoretical consequences, as will be discussed. Finally, as the world is perceived as female (even when “male” elements are employed), the alchemist, through the alchemical *saṃskāras*, initiates himself into Śivahood, and thus becomes the master, source and mover of Śakti.

In concrete terms, the alchemist’s two tasks are 1) the purification and stabilization of mercury through the use of sulphur, and 2)

the perfecting or transmutation of base metals into gold, the most essential substance (save mercury) through the use of that “controlled” mercury. The second step, when applied to the alchemist’s own body (which, as matter, is originally a form of Śakti, even if it later becomes “androgynous”) rather than the “bodies” of metals, results in the perfection of the body, as will be shown. In this case, *Rasāyana* bears the sense of “elixir” and “rejuvenation”, as in the Āyurvedic tradition.

In order to fully understand the processes of alchemy, we must come again to the Sāṅkhyan hierarchical system of the elements, as a corresponding hierarchical system. The *Rasāyan Sār*<sup>38</sup> is explicit in this regard, in its chapter entitled “The progression of absorption” (*Layakrama*):

The absorption of herbs takes place in lead. Lead is absorbed in tin, tin in copper, copper in silver, silver in gold and gold in mercury. Mercury which has been calcinated in sulphur is capable of restoring the body and is capable of “cooking” all of the elements. In the same way that earth is absorbed into water, water is absorbed into fire, fire into air, air into ether, ether into the *jīva*, and the *jīva* into the Brahman. Therefore, just as earth and the other elements associated with it, by virtue of being sthūla, are absorbed into water, they and all that follow (water, on the hierarchy) are absorbed into the most sūkṣma element, which is Brahman. In the same way, wood and other herbal forms are absorbed into the more sūkṣma element of lead, such that they and all that follow (lead, on the hierarchy) are absorbed into mercury.

Thus an explicit correspondence is made between the hierarchy of the elements and the hierarchy of metals, with Brahman equated with mercury (which in this text, as elsewhere, is identified with Śiva’s seed). These parallel hierarchies are not, moreover, arbitrary in the least. Just as it is a fact that earth dissolves in water, that water is penetrated and evaporated by fire, etc. etc, so the hierarchy of the metals is scientifically attributable to the relative *densities* of the metals which constitute it (except tin?), with lead being the least dense, and mercury the densest. In summary, that which is the most dense is the most subtle, and thus the closest to the universal essence and the power which obtains to it. This important point will be studied in depth later in this paper.

It thus seems safe to say that, in alchemical processes, a correspondence between these processes and an understanding of the nature of hierarchical reality was recognized, through which, in

turn, every element of the one was recognizable in the other. In this way, the Sāṅkhyan or Śaivite concept of the universe as a hierarchy based upon penetration and absorption came to stand as a hierarchical model (or summarizing symbol) for the processes of alchemy, or vice versa. By the same token, from the alchemical viewpoint, mercury was recognized as the essential element of a system of correspondences (or as an elaborating symbol), as it stood at once for the Brahman or Puruṣa, the seed of Śiva, Śivahood, and other analogous concepts in other parallel hierarchies which will be discussed below. Furthermore, in the saṃskāras of alchemy, the world view and ethos of the alchemist were mutually reinforcing, in the ritual dramatization of his faith.

Having developed the conceptual bases for alchemical processes, we may now describe those processes in greater detail. The first stage of alchemy consists in the preparation of mercury such that it may be capable of perfecting other elements. Mercury must be first extracted from the ores in which it is found, in which it has been “germinating.” It is most commonly found in cinnabar (*dārada*),<sup>39</sup> which is, not surprisingly, a compound of mercury and sulphur, mica or red arsenic, the latter being the primary mineral forms of Śakti in the world. With mercury, as with all elements, the term used for this extraction and purification is *śodhana* (“purify, refine, examine”), which is the first saṃskāra of every series of alchemical processes. Mercury, when purified, is liquid quicksilver, the potential analogy with sperm (*bindu*, *bīja*) being obvious. This is but a first step, however. In order to be capable of acting upon other metals, mercury must first be perfected. Mercury is perfected through several stages,<sup>40</sup> such that there exists a hierarchy of forms or stages of mercury, according to relative powers of transmutation. Once again, the position on the hierarchy is determined by the relative densities of the forms of mercury at those stages. In its densest form, mercury is called *khecarī* (“that which flies through the air”), in which state mercury has the properties of a dense *solid*. As such it is called “fixed” (*baddha*),<sup>41</sup> as its volatile nature has been subdued.

The “fixing” (*bandhana*) of mercury is a saṃskāra that occurs at the end of a series of the intermediate processes, of which “aging” (*jāraṇa*), “swooning” (*mūrccana*) and “killing” (*māraṇa*) are the

most important. These successive processes are repeated six times in order that the mercury may become *khecarī*. Such “six-times killed” mercury is extolled in texts as early as the *Kubjikā Tantra*.<sup>42</sup> This process of “killing” and “resurrecting” mercury into a “younger” and most subtle state has parallels with sacrificial *dīkṣā*;<sup>43</sup> and the concept of rebirth from dissolution, the “reversing” of time, is one that recurs in many parallel systems.

The means by which mercury is “killed” and “resurrected” into a subtler, more powerful form is fascinating.<sup>44</sup> In most general terms, mercury is placed in a closed crucible and heated along with sulphur and other female elements. The process takes place in two steps: first the mercury penetrates the sulphur and other female elements (the sexual analogy is to be borne in mind here), and it subsequently absorbs into itself the power residing in those female, less subtle substances. In this way, mercury is seen as sucking into itself the subtleness that lays embedded in the female elements, in order to make itself all the more subtle. At the same time, when it penetrates the sulphur in the first step, it sloughs off all of the gross impurities it might have contained in itself. The mercury then emerges from the crucible, reborn as it were, from the womb (*garbha*) of the female elements, purified and fortified, having left behind its own impurities in a useless compound (*bhasma*; ash, oxide) with the sulphur and the other female elements. At each successive “killing”, the mercury enters into greater and greater quantities of sulphur, in which it “dies” and is “resurrected” in a state more powerful and subtle than those which preceded. The *bhasma* that remains is testimony to its having been killed. Like the king who is reborn through the purificatory rites of *dīkṣā* in order to play the role of *yajamāna* in his own *rājasūya*, etc., without himself being sacrificed, so “King Mercury” (*rasendra*) emerges reborn from the purificatory womb of the female elements in order that he may effect the *saṃskāras* of *rasāyana*, without himself being burned away in the process.

The purification process of mercury may be repeated over and over again, as mercury mounts the six stages of its forms, and thus increases its powers of transmutation. In the end, it becomes capable of transmuting hundreds, thousands and millions of times its own weight of base metals into gold. In its most subtle form, it is

capable of transmuting by its mere “smell”, “smoke”, “sight”, or “sound”, following the hierarchy of the tanmātras.

Once mercury attains its pure, fixed form, it may be used to transmute other substances, such as the base metals. It must be borne in mind here that, as with mercury, the metals exist as “stages” in a hierarchical flux rather than as discrete, inert elements. In this context, transmutation is the passage, following the hierarchy of elements, from a lower more entropic stage to a higher more stable and primal one. In transmuting metals, one is, in effect, returning them to a primal purity, and thus reversing the processes of creation and remounting the passage of time. This is exactly how it is portrayed.<sup>45</sup> As with mercury, metals are first purified, and then pass through other intermediate saṃskāras precedent to transmutation. Transmutation is called *vedhana* (“piercing”), as this is what happens on the conceptual level. Because of its subtle nature, mercury is able to pierce or penetrate less subtle metals. In doing so, it “kills” them, such that their sūkṣma form emerges, as resurrected, from its previous, more sthūla envelope (which it has “sweated off”, as in dīkṣā—through the agency of mercury), leaving that old body behind as an ash (bhasma) in compound with the other substances. Thus, depending upon its own degree of perfection, mercury is capable of forcing the “self-transformation” of other elements by causing them to slough off their less dense, sthūla content, before becoming exhausted itself.

Thus, when mercury pierces lead, lead first sheds its “lead-ness” to become the stage known as tin. In the next process, the lead-made-tin sheds its “tin-ness” to become copper, and so on, until gold is realized and resurrected from the “chinese boxes” of the killed bodies that had previously enveloped its original subtle nature. As with mercury, there is a hierarchy of stages of gold as well, the highest of which is *hāṭaka* (“ferment gold”),<sup>46</sup> which has, in addition to the density of gold and gold’s other properties, the quality of nearly being *alive*. So charged is *hāṭaka* with subtleness and power that it has a rosy quality to it, is sweet-smelling, and shines “like a newly-risen sun.” However, even in its *hāṭaka* stage, gold can never be as subtle as mercury, which by virtue of its essential nature, is able to move at will on earth and in the air, to

“roar”, to transmute, etc. Just as only Śiva can be Śiva, so no metal, no matter how perfected, can become mercury itself. In this sense, mercury is conceptually divorced from the world of metals, even as it is essential to the transformation of that world in practice.

The realization of “living” hāṭaka gold brings us to the ultimate end of alchemical processes, which is the purification, rejuvenation and perfection of the human body. As was mentioned previously, Rasāyana has, as its earliest sense, in Āyurveda, “rejuvenation”; and in subsequent alchemical and medical tradition, “elixir of life,” when applied to the human body. In this regard, drawing directly upon the Śaivite understanding of absorption and penetration, and transferring all of the processes applied to metallic bodies to the human body, the hierarchized correspondences are made to operate in yet another sphere—that of human physiology—with all of the correspondences and hierarchies of the other systems remaining constant. The root metaphor (which is in this case based upon teleological reasoning) or model belief system thus becomes extended from the perfecting of base metals into gold to the perfecting of the human body. The summarizing symbol remains the Sāṅkhyan-Śaivite hierarchical model, and the elaborating symbol continues to be mercury = Śiva’s seed = Śiva = Brahman. The key scenario, or model for ritual practice, moves from the means by which wealth and powers are to be gained through the alchemical saṃskāras to the wealth, powers and immortality to be gained through similar saṃskāras as they are applied to the body. The key terms, in this latter case, are *siddhis* (“perfections, powers”) and *jīvanmukti* (“liberation in the body”). Returning to the opening lines of the *Rasārṇavam*, we find that this is the first matter of which Parvatī and Bhairava speak, and as the entire last chapter is devoted to *dehavedha* (“transmutation of the body”), we come to see that this is the concept which “frames” and, in a sense, constitutes the “raison d’être” for the whole text. In *Rasārṇavam* 1.6, Parvatī asks, “Of what nature is *jīvanmukti*?” to which Bhairava responds:<sup>47</sup>

“The nonaging-ness (*ajāra*) and immortality (*amāra*) of the body consists in the perceiving of Śiva-hood in one’s self. *Jīvanmukti* is difficult even for the gods to attain. Both the fall of the body (death) as *mokṣa* and *mokṣa* (liberation) itself are nonsensical. When its body falls, even a donkey is liberated.

Who of those born as dogs or pigs is not released? Even in the six schools, liberation is revealed as occurring upon the death of the body. The maintenance of the body is attained through *karma-yoga*. *Rasa* (mercury) and *pāvana* (the vital breaths, wind) are known as the twofold karma-yoga. Where there is stability of mercury, there is a solid body. He who eats killed mercury sees his mantras become effective. When one does not eat *pārada-rasa-Harabīja* (mercury-essence-Śiva's seed), whence is his liberation, whence the maintenance of his body?"

It is clear from this passage that this tradition, while "mainstream" Śaivite in the sense that it recognizes the individual ātman as being liberated into the universal essence Śiva or Brahman at death, places a low value upon such liberation. Apart from mere mokṣa there exists a means to a much higher end, which is to be gained through the elite, esoteric practices of alchemy. The Sāṅkhyan concept of multiple individual souls in multiple bodies seems pivotal here, as it is by means of this theological principle that a "shift" to "thinking with metals" more than with the original summarizing symbol of the all-absorbing, all-penetrating Brahman, Puruṣa or Śiva, is made possible. It is through this "loophole" that the more "matter-oriented" hierarchical model of the alchemical processes comes to alter the ultimate aims of man. This "new" materialist bent, which is to be found in certain forms of yoga and Tantra as well turns around the concept of *maximizing density* as a means to impenetrability, in the individual mercurial or human body. This concept, which I believe is absolutely essential to a proper understanding of these three traditions, even as they stand within or parallel to the broader hierarchical model of the Śaivite world view, will be developed throughout the balance of this essay. It must first be understood in terms of mercury.

In the Sāṅkhyan and Śaivite world views, all that exists in the material world is an emanation of the universal essence, and will ultimately return to that essence. In metaphysical terms, that essence, being wholly sūkṣma, is devoid of material attributes or properties. The material etc. being into which it emits itself through a series of hierarchical stages is possessed of properties of mass, energy and volume, but the essence itself is possessed of none of these. It is pure being, and thus the necessary ground for all other forms of being, none of which are like itself. Likewise, when the universe is reabsorbed into that essence at the end of time, although

the world is possessed of mass, energy, (time) etc., the universal essence does not take on these physical properties in reabsorbing them, as it is always wholly subtle. This is not so in the case of perfected mercury, however. Quite the contrary, in fact, as mercury, in becoming perfected, becomes possessed of an optimum mass, density, and energy. It becomes solid, impenetrable and supernaturally heavy for its volume, and its great energy is seen as existing by virtue of its incredible density. It seems that the key concept here is that of impenetrability, as the original essence, in its ability to penetrate all of creation, is itself impenetrable; but in the material world, such impenetrability is only achieved through maximizing density.

As with mercury, so with metals: their subtleness is measured in terms of their physical density, contrariwise to the nonphysical original essence, Brahman, Śiva etc. It is this phenomenon, recognized as being inherent to the hierarchical world of nature, that effects the “shift” of the hierarchical model from Śiva or Brahman to mercury, and thus necessitates the shift in the root metaphor and key scenario from reabsorption of the ātman back into the Brahman-Śiva (mokṣa), to the manipulation of the means to reabsorbing the mass, density, energy (and time) of the world back into the autonomous individual body (jīvanmukti). This perspective changes from one of participation within a closed, self-perpetuating system of temporally cyclic emission and reabsorption on the part of an essence of which one’s self is but a stage, to participating *as* an open system of pure absorption of energy and mass into a body of finite proportions which itself takes the place of the universal essence, and whose potential is infinite in terms of the accumulation of time (longevity), powers (siddhi) and density. The body becomes as perfected as the densest of metals and powerful as the most perfected forms of mercury, a human “black hole” as it were, sucking mass, energy and time into its tiny volume. Thus, while the reintegration of the gross into its more essential stages remains conceptually operative, the summarizing symbol is now solid mercury, and no longer an essence void of physical properties or qualities. The diamond (*vajra*) or golden body thus becomes a prime indicator of jīvanmukti, and in its more “expressive” forms, the Tantra which drew on this understanding extolled the worship

of one's own body as a god, and the use of any means to further the end of self-perfection.<sup>48</sup> As "human black holes", such *siddhas* saw themselves as transcending the laws of nature and of the gods.

The processes involved in the transmutation of the body are identical to those of metals. The body is "pierced" by the ingested, perfected mercury, which causes it to rid itself—through sweat, urine, feces, etc.—of that which is *sthūla* in it, such that only the *sūkṣma* remains. As *sthūla* "envelopes" are successively stripped away, the body, like the metallic stages, becomes denser, more powerful, shining and immortal. The body becomes perfected (*kāya siddha*),<sup>49</sup> as hard as a diamond (*vajra*), impenetrable and all-penetrating. It shines and smells like *hāṭaka* gold. The hair becomes as black antimony, and the face and form of the man become those of a beautiful adolescent just entering into maturity. He becomes eternally young and unsusceptible to disease or injury. He is possessed of all of the *siddhis*, which include invisibility (*āñjana*), the ability to fly (*khecara*), to make things appear or disappear at will, to make his body infinitely small (*aṇimā*), great (*mahimā*), light (*laghimā*), heavy (*garimā*), the ability to attain all of his desires, to control others' minds, and numerous others, ranging from the sublime to the pornographic.<sup>50</sup>

The *siddha* also becomes capable of transmuting base metals into gold through the use of his bodily excrements, his touch or the mere sound of his voice.<sup>51</sup> At this point, the need to perform alchemical *saṃskāras* is transcended. *Jīvanmukti*, which once attained is irreversible, permits an individual to control the universe through his body alone. He becomes greater than even the gods themselves. Depending on how long he holds a pill of mercury in his mouth, a *siddha* attains the spheres and powers, successively, of Indra, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Īśvara, Śiva Īśāna and Svayambhū. He then becomes capable of effecting his curses upon the material world, of himself becoming the *Viśvārūpa*, and of being worshipped by the gods. His longevity also increases in function of the amount of time he holds the mercury pill in his mouth, until he is able to outlive the universe.<sup>52</sup> Here, clearly, the original hierarchical model has been "imploded", and a "new" one, informed by chemical processes, has taken its place, in making the original model a sub-category of itself.

It is at this point, having arrived at the human body itself as an independent center of power and being, that we may approach the subject of *yoga*, and the analogies it bears with alchemical substances, processes, hierarchies and aims. It has been noted by several scholars<sup>53</sup> that yoga basically consists in internalizing the chemical processes of alchemy into the psychochemical processes of the subtle body (with changes in the subtle being manifested in the gross, corporeal body). The parallels between the two systems are nearly all-encompassing, such that for any term or element in one, there is a direct correspondence in the other. In order to discuss these parallels, I will draw on various traditions of yoga which were contemporary with the *Rasārṇavam*. These include *Laya*, *Siddha*, *Kuṇḍalinī*, *Rāja*, *Haṭha* and various other Śaivite Tantric forms of yoga, as well as a certain “grounding” in *Pātāñjala* yoga and the yoga of the *Nāth* panth.

The *Rasārṇavam* itself is rich in injunctions and instructions regarding the performance of various yogic practices, especially the use of mantras, the regulation of the breaths, various postures and meditative states, the necessity of receiving instruction from a guru, aspects of the subtle physiology, etc. etc. As will be shown, yogic texts are equally rich in references to alchemy. The intimate relationship between the two systems may be further elucidated through historical documentation. The *Sarvadarśanasamgraha* of Mādhava enumerates “the science of the lord of essences” (*Raseśvara darśana*) as one of the schools of yoga.<sup>54</sup> The word “yoga” itself, while it bears as its primary sense the concept of “union” or “the act of harnessing” (*√yuj*), also has the sense of “method” or even “magical recipe”. Thus the *Yogatattva Upaniṣad* can make the statement, “By means of yoga,” one can, “with the help of a little mud mixed with urine, transmute brass into gold.”<sup>55</sup> If yoga is understood as a method to controlling the powers of nature, of reintegrating those powers into oneself, the parallels with alchemy are readily apparent. The Buddhist Tantra, the *Sādhnamālā*, makes an interesting statement in this regard: “As copper leaves its dirty color behind (and becomes gold), when it comes into contact with the magical *rasa*, similarly the body leaves off its attachment of hatred, etc. when it comes into contact with the *rasa* of *Advāya*.”<sup>56</sup>

Before we turn to the yogic tradition *per se*, it must be pointed out that the concentration here will be upon the physical processes that take place within the (subtle) body, rather than upon the accompanying mental states. I choose this emphasis for three reasons. First, of the eight steps of yoga as outlined by Patañjali,<sup>57</sup> only the final two deal exclusively with “disembodied” states of consciousness. Second, there are many more parallels to be found between alchemical processes with the psychochemical processes of yoga’s subtle body than with the purely mental states of yoga. Finally, although it is true that *samādhi* (con-centr-ation, enstasis, liberation of the soul) is the ultimate aim of yoga, the great wealth of yogic literature, especially hagiographic, is devoted to what yogins *do* and how they do it. Moreover, those yogins who attain *samādhi* and do not “pass on” remain in their physical state because they are *jīvanmukta*.<sup>58</sup>

Having discussed the conceptual and terminological parameters of alchemy, an explanation of yoga may be accomplished, to a certain extent, by paralleling terms. The *saṃskāras* of alchemy become the *sādhana*s of yoga. As with the *saṃskāras*, the *sādhana*s consist in a series of initiations into subtler and subtler stages of the elements of the (in this case, human) body. *Sādhana* is derived from  $\sqrt{sādh}$  “to accomplish, complete, make perfect,” and is etymologically related to  $\sqrt{sidh}$  (its “weak form”), and thus to *siddha* (“perfected one”) and *siddhi* (“perfection” n.m.), which have already been discussed. Once again, leaving considerations of purely mental processes aside, we are in the presence of a system whose end is to perfect the human body.

Sexualization and hierarchization are also present, as in alchemy, but with new sets of correspondences. The subtle body is androgynous, being possessed of a male *liṅgam* (rooted in the lowest *cakra*, the *mūlādhāra*) and a female serpent, the *Kuṇḍalinī*,<sup>59</sup> who sleeps with her mouth over the tip of the *liṅgam*. It is also androgynous in that it contains both sperm (*bindu*) and blood (*śoṇita*),<sup>60</sup> the bodily essences of Śiva and Śakti, which are also equated with the ambrosia-(*amṛta*)-producing *moon* in the highest *cakra* and the all-devouring *sun* in the lowest *cakra*, the *Īḍā* (major upward-tending *nāḍī*) and the *Piṅgalā* (major downward-tending *nāḍī*) *nāḍī*s, respectively. The subtle body is also hierarchized, principally in the

systems of the cakras and nāḍīs. Running from the base of the spine to the dome of the skull, the spinal column (*Meru-daṇḍa*) is the center of this system. Located at regular intervals along this vertical axis are the six cakras, the lower of which are associated with *pravṛtti* (active, concerned) Śakti, and the upper with *nivṛtti* (inactive, indifferent) Śiva,<sup>61</sup> which have the form of lotuses.

At this point, we may speak of the yogic cosmology of the microcosm and the macrocosm. The concept of the body as microcosm is made explicit in Yoga. The *Gorakh Sabadi* (GS) speaks of the brahman as residing in the *brahmarandhra* (“the cleft of brahman”, located in the highest cakra) in the yogin’s head in the following terms: “Here (in the brahmarandhra) is the undecaying, hidden brahman. Here the three worlds are made. The undecaying is always with us. For this reason, one may become an eternally perfect (siddha) *yogeśvara*.”<sup>62</sup>

The cakras of the subtle body are also called *tīrthas* (watered pilgrimage sites)<sup>63</sup> or *pīṭhas* (“seats” of the goddess, as pilgrimage sites).<sup>64</sup> The body is seen as containing all of the *tīrthas* and *lokas* (worlds, levels)<sup>65</sup> of the physical universe, with its rivers (*nāḍīs* = *nāḍīs*), of which the Sarasvatī (= *Suṣumṇā*), Gaṅgā (= *Īdā*) and Yamunā (= *Pīṅgalā*) are the three principal ones.<sup>66</sup> To these three correspond three pairs of cakras, the three *guṇas*, the gods of the *Trimūrti*, three pairs of elements (with *manas* as the sixth), the triad of fire, sun, and moon, etc. etc.<sup>67</sup> In Buddhist Tantra, the *four* major cakras are named for the four principal *pīṭhas*: *Kāmarūpa*, *Jālaṃdhara*, *Pūrṇaśaila* and *Uḍḍiyāna*, with these ordered hierarchically in the body and in cosmogony, as each is considered to be the site at which the goddess resides in each of the four yugas.<sup>68</sup> The Kuṇḍalinī is called *pralaya*<sup>69</sup> and is conceived as meditating (or dancing) upon the “cremation grounds” of the subtle body (= the universe at *pralaya*),<sup>70</sup> thus making the body a microcosm for temporal as well as spatial constructs. The moon of the *Sahasrāra* (the uppermost cakra) is conceived as a *well of amṛta* (with *amṛta*, as refined semen, equated with mercury),<sup>71</sup> recalling the wells of mercury of the alchemical tradition, in the GS: “In the sphere of the sky (= *Sahasrāra*) is an upside-down well where *amṛta* dwells. He who has a guru may drink his fill; he who has no guru is thirsty.”<sup>72</sup>

The pīṭha of the goddess Kāmākhyā in Kāmarūpa was reputed to have a well of mercury adjacent to the goddess (who is represented as a cleft in the rock which is said to be her vulva), whose stone body is itself composed of red arsenic, one of the forms she takes in uniting with Śiva in his mercurial form. A myth from the *Siṃhāsanadvātriṃśikā* tells of an ascetic who attains mercury and siddhis at that well.<sup>73</sup> The names for certain rites (of purification, etc.), the use of ashes and other substances at such pīṭhas have numerous parallels in alchemy, yoga and dīkṣā.<sup>74</sup> In this way, it becomes apparent that the yogic body microcosm, the universal macrocosm and the alchemical hierarchical model mercury (= *amṛta* = bindu = liberating waters of tīrthas) are mutually informing within the context of Śaivite understandings of cosmogony, cosmology and tīrthas.

Let us return to the yogic microcosm. Each cakra is analogized with a potential state of purification and *sūkṣmaness*, and, as such, each is associated with one of the elements, from earth in the Mūlādhāra to ether/*manas* in the Sahasrāra,<sup>75</sup> and with a mystic *māṭṛkā*.<sup>76</sup> The nāḍīs, through which the breaths (*prāṇa*, *apāna*) circulate weave back and forth across the axis of the cakras. Running upwards through the cakras is the *Suṣumṇā nāḍī*, the most essential nāḍī, which is equated with the (fire of) Brahman; uniting with the Suṣumṇā once at each of the cakras are the *Īḍā* (moon, male) and *Piṅgalā* (sun, female) nāḍīs. These are the three subtlest nāḍīs, and correspond to Sadāśiva, Śiva and Śakti, respectively. The goal is to regulate (*prāṇāyama*) and suppress (*kumbhaka*) the breaths in the thousands of nāḍīs, including the *Īḍā* and *Piṅgalā*, such that the fiery Suṣumṇā alone may become the sole passage of the breaths, by which all breath may become concentrated in the axis of the cakras. This is effected through the use of breathing techniques, yogic postures, meditation, mantra, yantra and retention of the sperm (or sexual intercourse, in certain Tantric traditions), etc. All serve as means to the ultimate end of *absorption* into one's center (the Sahasrāra, or 1000-petalled cakra) of all of the bodily elements and thought processes. In terms of states of consciousness, the ideal is total absorption into the wholly subtle *cit* (pure consciousness = Brahman), by which one "bursts into" union with the absolute. In terms of physical states, it is the perfecting of the body

fluids, the transmutation of the body, and once again, the getting of density, impenetrability and immortality that is the ultimate end.

As with mercury in alchemy, so the forms of the male essence (sperm = *rasa*) in the body exist as stages of an absolute essence (*amṛta*). When the *rasa* is in the lower cakras, it exists as sperm; in the uppermost *Sahasrāra*, the downturned lotus or full moon, it exists as *amṛta*.<sup>77</sup> The reason for this is simple: the lower cakras are *sthūla*; the *Sahasrāra*, when properly controlled, is Brahman. The goal of *Kuṇḍalinī* yoga, then, at least as far as physical processes are concerned, is to “excite” the *Kuṇḍalinī* serpent goddess into a wakeful state, and into desiring and effecting union with her consort in his pure state in the *Sahasrāra*. When she sleeps, that is, when the body in which she dwells is not subject to yogic exercise, the *rasa* that flows into her mouth from the lingam in the *Mūlādhāra* flows through and out of the lower end of her coiled body, and remains in the region of the *sthūla* male sexual organ. Unnourished by the *rasa* she bears with her when she mounts the cakras, the downturned moon in the head wanes down to a single digit, the other fifteen being dissipated through the body, and settled out as sperm in the lower cakras. Through *prāṇāyama* (which is equated with transmutation)<sup>78</sup> and *kumbhaka*, the *Kuṇḍalinī*, awakened and full of desire, is forced into the passage of the *Suṣumṇā* (also called the *brahmamārga*, “the path of/to Brahman”), through which she mounts the cakras towards the *Sahasrāra*. As she comes to each cakra, she must pierce (*vedhana*, as in alchemy) through it. In doing so, the heat produced causes a refining of the *rasa* that fills her body, such that a portion of it is forced upward out of her mouth to “recondense” in the dome of the skull, in the now waxing moon of the *Sahasrāra*, in the form of perfected *amṛta*.<sup>79</sup> Thus, at each of the six cakras, a purification/transmutation of the *rasa* takes place, such that by the time the head of the *Kuṇḍalinī* reaches it, the downturned moon is once again full and oozing with *amṛta*. There can be no doubt that with this we are once again in the presence of six-times-killed mercury (*rasa* = sperm = source of immortality),<sup>80</sup> which, having been purified through heating inside the female *Kuṇḍalinī*, attains a state which renders it capable of transmuting other bodies. The alchemical parallel, as well as the sexual metaphor, and the evocation of the

process of dīkṣā are all very clear here. And, as will be seen, the transmutation of the body does in fact follow directly upon the yogic mounting of the Kuṇḍalinī.

As the Kuṇḍalinī rises, through the regulation of the prāṇas and other practices of con-centr-ation, both consciousness (cit) and the rasa are made stable (*sthira*).<sup>81</sup> It is in this making sthira of the cit, prāṇas and the rasa that the “fixing” of mercury into a state most capable of transmuting has its strongest analogies in the physiological and psychochemical processes of yogic practice. These parallels are made explicit in the *GS*<sup>82</sup> and the *Rāja Rāṇi Saṃvād*:<sup>83</sup>

Control of water brings unwavering ether; control of food makes the light shine forth; control of the breaths closes the nine doors (the bodily orifices); control of the seed makes the body *sthira*.

When the mind (*man*) is sthira, then the seed (*byand* = *bindu*) is sthira; from stability of the seed there is a stable body.

When the mind is wandering (*calantam*), the breath (*pavan*) moves; when the breath is moving, so is the seed; when the seed is moving, the body falls (i.e. dies).

The analogy of the elephant in rut is reproduced as well, with the cit-amṛta standing for mercury: “Bringing the moon from its setting place to its rising place, where it mingles with the breaths, the elephant is bound and held in its pen.”<sup>84</sup>

The term used by the Nāth tradition to describe these processes of mounting the Kuṇḍalinī (or the fire), and rendering the body, prāṇas, cit and seed immobile and stable is *ulaṭā* (“reversal”). For, indeed, as in the case of the purification, transmutation and perfection of metals, the entropic course of nature, even of time, is reversed. That which has emanated into ever more sthūla forms is brought back its earlier sūkṣma state. So it is with the practice of yoga. When the Kuṇḍalinī sleeps and the moon, breaths, consciousness and bodily elements are dispersed, the body is in its original state of entropy. In the process of reintegrating all of these elements back into their primal state, i.e. to the state of the unmoving, unmoved, self-contained, etc. Brahman, a reversal of the bodily processes of aging, disease, decay and death is effected. This is an absorption back into the original essence, and thus a return to an earlier (ontological) time. Thus the necessity of rendering the various elements into a state in which their essences

are concentrated enough to resorb all that originally arose from them. The idea of *ulaṭā* is mentioned in many places in the *Gorakh Sabadi*:

“Devour the inhalation and exhalation of the breath. Close the nine doors. In six months the body is reversed and the yogin attains supreme indifference. One should keep the body stable and the breaths restrained. He is then never sick. In twelve days the body is reversed three times, through the use of tin, lead and herbs.”<sup>85</sup>

With the reversal of the bodily processes and the stabilizing of its essential elements, the body is primed for transmutation. The Kuṇḍalinī (or fire) unites with the full moon in the dome of the head, wherein the stabilized cit and prāṇa also lie, and a torrent of amṛta floods through the body in an orgasmic rush:

“When the *nāda* is reversed, the sperm is reversed. When the breaths are restrained, the immortal essence is realized. The torrent surges from the sphere of the void when the sun and moon hold one in indifference. Going to the northern region, the fruit of the void is eaten, and one wears the fire of Brahman as his ascetic garb. He whose mind is made steady drinks the amṛta that surges out in a flood.”<sup>86</sup>

Through repeated mountings of the Kuṇḍalinī,<sup>87</sup> the cit-prāṇa-amṛta becomes more and more stable (or “fixed”) and their powers become greater and greater. The flooding of the body with amṛta after each union of the Kuṇḍalinī with the Brahman in the Sahasrāra transmutes the body, just as does mercury when it is taken orally. With each union, with each transmutation, then, the body becomes progressively purified and more subtle. Just as with metals, the bodily elements remount the hierarchy of matter until, as with mercury, the body is wholly transmuted, and becomes golden or diamond-like, impenetrable, immortal and possessed of siddhis:

“By seating the primal Brahman between the two (nāḍīs), the siddhi of *Guṭika bandha* (= the fixing of a pill of mercury, in *Rasārnavam*) is obtained, and one’s body lives as long as the earth. Transmute the diamond with the proper sounds, using the tongue as a stamp. Good qualities are produced from lesser qualities. In this way all of existence becomes one’s disciple.”<sup>88</sup>

As with the ingestion of mercury, the siddhis enjoyed by the yogin are numerous and varied. The oral tradition is full of stories of yogins who have gained immortal, impenetrable bodies. Gorakhnāth, whose body is *vajra*, does battle with another yogin,

Āllabha Prābhudeva. Āllabha strikes Gorakh with his sword, and the sword is shattered without Gorakh being pierced in the least. Gorakh then strikes at Āllabha, whose body is cut in half, only to reappear, intact and flying through the air.<sup>89</sup> Gorakhnāth turns horse dung into a blanket, a bundle of grass and then a human being, which he infuses with life. He grants children to barren women, is able to exert his powers over great distances, burn heaven and earth with his austerities, and transform himself into whatsoever being or form as he desires.<sup>90</sup> Once Gorakh's guru, Matsyendranāth, having lost his yogic powers through dissolute living, is taken by Yama (i.e. he dies). Gorakh goes to Yamaloka, gives Yama a beating, threatens to do worse if Yama ever tries to touch a Nāth again, and restores Matsyendranāth to life.<sup>91</sup> Once again, through reversing the processes of creation (which tend towards entropy), the adept becomes capable of overcoming, of tricking Time (*"Kāla-vāñca"*) and Death.<sup>92</sup>

There is another aspect of yoga which must be discussed here, which will serve to bring us back to our considerations of attaining physical density as the ultimate end of the "new" matter-oriented ethoi and world views of the traditions under study. This concerns the place of sperm in the yogic subtle physiology. Sperm is as essential to yoga as mercury is to alchemy. Only from sperm is it possible to obtain the amṛta by which the body is rejuvenated and made siddha. It is thus very valuable, and the necessity of having an optimum quantity of sperm in the body to fuel the psychochemical process is emphasized in every tradition. There are two means to retaining a rich supply of sperm in the body. The first is abstinence, which is the path stressed in the teachings of Gorakhnāth: "Do not allow sperm, the essence of the blood, to go out, and the diamond will not crack."<sup>93</sup>

Once again, the hierarchical model of the Brahman is shifted to that of the subsidiary, parallel category. When sperm-born amṛta is *sthira* in the Sahasrāra, along with the cit and prāṇa, the yogin is the most absorbed into the most elevated state. Through repeated transmutations, in the use of transmuted sperm, the whole body becomes "packed" as it were, with that physical form of the essential. It is made solid with the transmuted sperm to the point of impenetrability. It is in this way that the body becomes *vajra* to the

outside, because inside it is packed with perfected, fixed, solidified sperm. The yogin who, through the *sādhana*s, attains a perfect body and *siddhi*s, becomes, as in the case of alchemy, a “black hole”, capable of absorbing the energy of the universe into himself and transmuting it into an ever denser body that flouts the laws of the universe.

There is another means to retaining one’s sperm, which makes this parallel even more explicit. This is to be found in the sexual practices of Tantric yoga, particularly in the *vajrolī* (or *amarolī* or *sahajolī*) *mudrā*.<sup>94</sup> In this practice, the yogin, having ejaculated inside his partner, draws his sperm back into himself by mechanical means, using his penis like a “fountain pen”. In doing so, he retrieves all of the sperm he would otherwise have lost.

But this is not all. One need only recall the way the purification of mercury in sulphur was conceptualized in alchemy for this to be understood clearly. As with mercury and sulphur in alchemy, sperm and blood are to be seen as complementary, corresponding to Śiva and Śakti. Although it was not emphasized above, it is the *interaction* of blood and sperm, the sun and moon, the Kuṇḍalanī and the Sahasrāra, the Piṅgalā and the Īḍā, that is essential to the refining of sperm into amṛta and the subsequent transmutation of the body. The energy of blood must be fused with that of sperm for an embryo to be created which will develop into a child. In many ways, the Sāṅkhyan system from which these traditions took their structure, is based upon embryology.

The Tantric yogins conceived of the *vajrolī mudrā* as follows: by emitting one’s semen into a woman and drawing it back into the penis before withdrawal, one leaves behind the gross matter of the semen and, in addition to the “subtle” sperm, the energy of the blood inside the *yoni* or *garbha* is also drawn into the yogic. This is exactly what takes place in the purification, etc. of mercury in sulphur. The mercury penetrates the sulphur, absorbs the energy of the sulphur into itself, and leaves behind a useless residue of its own impurities in compound with the drained sulphur. In this way, through repeated penetrations and absorptions into itself of the female essence, the male essence is made *baddha*,<sup>95</sup> *sthira* and *siddha*.

What better metaphor for the “new” hierarchical model of these traditions than the *vajrolī mudrā*? The yogin = sperm = mercury

penetrates the yogini = blood = sulphur to absorb their energy and thus become “dense” = Śiva = Brahman. In all three of these traditions, the concept of *laya* into the impenetrable Brahman becomes transformed into the absorption of matter and energy into a hyper-concentrated bodily crucible, by virtue of which that body becomes supernatural.<sup>96</sup> In this way, a Śaivite version of a Sāṅkhyan world view and ethos, with the hierarchical model of the Brahman (Puruṣa, Sadāśiva...) and its corresponding ritual and belief systems undergoes—through a teleological form of reasoning founded upon the properties of the constituent elements of a corresponding alchemical (or bodily) hierarchy—a transformation into a quite “different” world view, ethos and hierarchical model. And, based upon the hierarchical model of mercury = sperm = amṛta, the ritual and belief models come to be transformed into a perception of the material world as the source of the essential, with the manipulation and absorption of matter as the ultimate human activity. Yet, even within the context of their “new” world view and ethos, most alchemists, yogins and Tantrics of medieval India perceived their belief systems and ritual practices as being quite consonant with the Śaivite system of which they considered themselves to be a part.

It has not been my intention here to argue that any one of the alchemical, yogic or Śaivite cosmological or cosmogonic systems that have been discussed was the source of any or all of the other traditions. My intention throughout has been to “bracket out” such questions of primacy, even when referring to “new” systems, hierarchical models, world views, etc. In these cases, “new” was meant to be taken in the sense of “alternative, but parallel,” which should bring us back to one of our original theses: that the parallel hierarchies of these systems were mutually informing and enriching. Thus the variations on a cosmological hierarchy realized through the manipulation of mineral substances did not rule out an understanding of the original essence as being without physical properties or qualities: the two simply “resonated” together as analogues of one another. This was not a case of *either this or that*, but of *both this and that*. Thus the getting of density, through alchemical and yogic practices, while “physically” contradicting the parallel model of the absolute essence in fact complemented that model symbolically, and vice versa. In this way, “thinking with

metals” and bodily fluids reinforced a process of symbolic (self-)interpretation that had been ongoing, no doubt, even before the conceptual models of Sāṅkhyan, etc. hierarchies had been “canonized”. Furthermore, the idea of reversing the cosmogonic process, and thus time itself, was not one which contradicted the cosmogonic model, as pralaya was in fact conceived as a reversal of the cosmogonic process of sṛṣṭi. In this sense, the alchemist, yogin or Tantric was merely “helping nature along” towards its irreversible end—which would serve as a new matrix for a new beginning of the cosmic cycle. In one sense, there was nothing “new” in these traditions, apart from the bodies upon which they operated; in another sense, they were wholly new. Herein lies the reassuring redundancy of variant interpretations or versions of any given myth, symbol or ritual.<sup>97</sup> Not either/or, but both..and. Such is the wealth and power of symbols that permit us to tell ourselves who we are.

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\* The research for this article was done under the auspices of an NDEA title VI grant, under the supervision of Professor K. C. Bahl of the University of Chicago.

<sup>1</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, Basic Books, 1973), pp. 87-125.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *The Conflict of Interpretations* (Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1974), p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Geertz, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

<sup>4</sup> Sherry Ortner, “On Key Symbols,” *Reader in Comparative Religion* ed. by William A. Lessa and Evon Z. Vogt, (New York, Harper and Row, 1979), pp. 92-98.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97: “...a given summarizing symbol is “key” to the system insofar as the meanings which it formulates are logically or affectively prior to other meanings of the system. By “logically or affectively prior,” I mean simply that many other cultural ideas and attitudes presuppose, and make sense only in the context of, those meanings formulated by the symbol.”

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97: “The key role of the elaborating symbol, by contrast, derives not so much from the status of its particular substantive meanings, but from its formal or organizational role in relation to the system; that is, we say such a symbol is “key” to systems insofar as it extensively and systematically formulates relationships—parallels, isomorphisms, complementarities and so forth—between a wide range of diverse cultural elements.”

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96: "Root metaphors, by establishing a certain view of the world, implicitly suggest certain valid and effective ways of acting upon it; key scenarios, by prescribing certain culturally effective courses of action, embody and rest upon certain assumptions about the nature of reality."

<sup>8</sup> *Rasāyana* is a compound of *rasa* + *āyana*, in which "rasa" stands at once for "essence", "mercury", "sperm", "liquid element" etc., and "āyana" for "the way of". While the common translation for this term is "the way of mercury," the other senses of "rasa" are also inherent to it. It is also the Ayurvedic term for longevity, or the elixir of life.

<sup>9</sup> *Rasārṇavam* ed. by Sir Phrullha Chandra Ray and Pandit Harischandra Kaviratna, (Bibliotheca Indica, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Nos 1193, 1220 and 1238) Calcutta, Satya Press, 1901-1910. All translations my own.

<sup>10</sup> This is admirably illustrated by medieval Puranic accounts of primary creation (cf. Madeleine Biardeau, "Cosmogonie Purānique," in *Dictionnaire des mythologies* ed. by Yves Bonnefoy (Paris, Flammarion, 1981), vol. I, p. 236), schematically described as follows: Puruṣa → Avyakta → Mahān (ātmā) → the three guṇas → Ahaṃkāra → Vaikārika/Bhūtādi → the five cognitive organs/the five sentient qualities—the five sensory organs/the five elements.

<sup>11</sup> This reverse movement is epitomized in the stages of yoga, as related in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 3.10-11; 6.7-8 (cf. Biardeau, *op. cit.*, p. 236), by which reabsorption into the absolute proceeds from the sensory organs → manas → mahān (ātmā) → Avyakta → Puruṣa (→ Brahman).

<sup>12</sup> *RV* 10.90.

<sup>13</sup> The *Parasāra* version of the tanmātras is as follows: The tanmātras originate from one another in one linear series, and each bhūta originates in a separate line from its own tanmātra, such that:

*Bhūtādi*

*Śabdātmanmātra*—— (Sound tanmātra), as a radical or center encircled by Bhūtādi, generates *ākāśa* (ether).

*Sparśātmanmātra*—— (Touch tanmātra), as a radical or center encircled by Śabdātmanmātra, with the ākāśa-atom as a catalyst, generates *vāyu* (air).

*Rūpātmanmātra*—— (Color tanmātra) as a radical or center encircled by Sparśātmanmātra with the vāyu-atom as a catalyst, generates *tejas* (fire).

*Rasātmanmātra*—— (Taste tanmātra), as a radical or center encircled by Rūpātmanmātra with the tejas-atom as a catalyst, generates *āpas* (water).

*Gandhātmanmātra*—— (Smell tanmātra), as a radical or center encircled by the Rasātmanmātra, with the āpas-atom as a catalyst, generates *prthivī* (earth).

(Cf. P. Ray, *History of chemistry*., p. 264. See n. 42).

<sup>14</sup> *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad* 10.10.1, cited in Jean Varenne, *Yoga and the Hindu Tradition* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1973), p. 45.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. notes 10, 11, and 13.

<sup>16</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Forgerons et alchimistes* (Paris, Flammarion, 1977), pp. 27-34 and *passim*. Creation is viewed as sexual from an early time in Hindu mythology, an example being in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (1.4.1-6) myth of the man-soul who divides himself into man and woman. The two then mate, in various creaturely forms, to give rise to all of the creatures of the universe. In Sāṅkhya, the primary emanations of Puruṣa and Prakṛti give rise, through further emanations of

themselves (being male and female respectively), to all of creation. Śaivite cosmology, drawing on the yogic tradition, conceives of all of creation and universal processes as being emanations of the eternal union of Śiva (as male and potentiality) and his female aspect Śakti (as energy and manifestation).

<sup>17</sup> The yogic representation of creation as the reverse of yogic processes should be retained here (cf. notes 10 and 11) as well as the relationship between *laya* and *pralaya*, especially when Śiva is portrayed as the great yogin.

<sup>18</sup> D. C. Sircar, *The Śakta Pūthas* (New Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1973), pp. 3-4.

<sup>19</sup> Eliade, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

<sup>20</sup> Van Kooij, *Worship of the Goddess according to the Kālikā Purāṇa*, (Leiden, Brill, 1972), vol. I, p. 36.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *Rasataramgiṇī*, ed. by Haridatta Shastri et. al., (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1965) 5:1-2; *Rasaratnasamucchaya of Vāgbhaṭṭācārya*, ed. by Pandit Sridharmananda Sharma (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1964) 1:67; and *Rasārṇavam* 10:4-5.

<sup>22</sup> See note 8.

<sup>23</sup> *Rasataramgiṇī* 5:2.

<sup>24</sup> *Rasārṇavam* 1:36.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:28.

<sup>27</sup> *Rasaratnasamucchaya* 1:61-66.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:85-88.

<sup>29</sup> The goddess's mineral essence is also qualified as being mica (*Rasārṇavam* 6.1) or red arsenic (Van Kooij, *op. cit.*, p. 26).

<sup>30</sup> *Rasārṇavam* 7:57-66.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:37-38.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:43-44, 52 etc.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:109-116.

<sup>34</sup> *Samskāra* (*saṃ-s-√kr*: join together, form well) has as its primary sense "putting together, making perfect". Applied to food, it has the sense of "preparation"; to animal husbandry, "rearing"; to human education, "cultivation"; to astronomy, "correction"; to the human body "cleansing". In religious life (if such is separable from culture in the Hindu tradition), *saṃskāra* stands for "sacrament" or "sanctifying or consecrating ceremony." There are traditionally twelve *saṃskāras*, the performances of which extend from womb to tomb to regeneration beyond death. In the practice of the *saṃskāras*, the self is made perfect according to the nature and processes of being itself. It is with this and the preceding applications of this term that one must approach this concept as it applies to alchemy.

<sup>35</sup> *Rasaratnasamucchaya* 8:2-3.

<sup>36</sup> *Rasārṇavam* 2:107-108.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:90.

<sup>38</sup> *Rasāyan Sār*, ed. by Syamasundaracarya Vaisya (Varanasi, 1914), pp. 85-86. While this is a very late compilation, it nearly wholly respects earlier textual traditions.

<sup>39</sup> S. Mahdihassan, *Indian alchemy or Rasayana* (New Delhi, Vikas Press, 1979), p. 101. See also note 29.

<sup>40</sup> *Rasārṇavam* 12: 198 ff.

<sup>41</sup> *Bandhana* is generally translated as "fixing" in alchemical contexts, with the metaphor of the wild rutting elephant which must be bound or subdued standing for mercury (see note 37 and below) and for the *cit* in yoga. This term also covers,

however, the concepts of stabilization or solidification (of mercury, from its liquid form) and even “tumidification” in the sense that, as with the sperm with which it is identified, the confinement of mercury causes it to harden and swell, and thus become more powerful in its ability to penetrate other (female) substances.

<sup>42</sup> Praphulla Chandra Ray, *History of Chemistry in Ancient and Medieval India*, ed. by Priyanaranjan Ray (Calcutta, Indian Chemical Society, 1956), p. 115.

<sup>43</sup> Eliade, *op. cit.*, p. 108, and Mircea Eliade, *Le yoga: immortalité et liberté* (Paris, Payot, 1954), pp. 113-118.

<sup>44</sup> *Rasārṇavam* chaps. 11 and 12.

<sup>45</sup> Eliade (1977: 117).

<sup>46</sup> *Rasopaniṣat*, ed. by K. S. Shastri (Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, No. 92), Trivandrum, 1924: 18:77 *inter alia*; Mahdihassan, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>47</sup> *Rasārṇavam* 1:8, 9, 11, 18, 19, 22, 28. Bhairava is a form of Śiva.

<sup>48</sup> *Two Vājrayāna Works*, ed. by Benoytosh Bhattacharya, (Gaekwad's Oriental Series, No. 44), Baroda, Oriental Institute, 1929, p. ix.

<sup>49</sup> Many of the siddhis have alchemical names, as *khecari* (= mercury; “flying through the air”) and *āñjana* (= black antimony; “invisibility”). The eight siddhis are mentioned in *Rasārṇavam* 14:43-44; 18:167-169. For many of the thirty-five siddhis, see Varenne, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-134.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. *Rasārṇavam* 12:336-337.

<sup>51</sup> *Rasopaniṣat* 17:1-34 *Rasārṇavam*, chap. 18, *passim*.

<sup>52</sup> *Rasārṇavam* 14:24-44.

<sup>53</sup> Eliade (1977: 107-117); Shashibhusan Das Gupta, *Obscure Religious Cults* (Calcutta, Mukhyopadhyaya, 1969), p. 194.

<sup>54</sup> Cited in Das Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

<sup>55</sup> *Yogatattva Upaniṣad*, cited in Varenne, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

<sup>56</sup> *Sādhnamālā*, ed. by Benoytosh Bhattacharya (Gaekwad's Oriental Series, No. 41), Baroda, Oriental Institute, 1928), p. lxxvi.

<sup>57</sup> Varenne, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 138.

<sup>59</sup> In the “desexualized” context of the Nāth tradition, it is the fire of Brahman (*Brahmāgni*), rather than the Kuṇḍalinī, that mounts the cakras. Yoga, as the internalization into psychochemical processes of the alchemical processes, and of the purificatory rite of *dikṣā* etc., is to be seen as a ritual process in the same way that alchemy was so described.

<sup>60</sup> The complementarity of blood and sperm also exists in Indian perceptions of human genesis, with the embryo understood as being evolved solely from sperm and blood. Cf. Gopinath Kaviraj, *Tāntrik vāṇmay mēm Śaktidṛṣṭi* (Patna, Bihar Rashtrabhasa Parisad, 1963), p. 238: “The secret is that just as the material body is born of a combination of sperm and blood, in the same way the rasa-body is born of the power of Śiva and Śakti. That being whose dissolution takes place and that in which dissolution takes place become identical. By the dissolution of gold, etc. in mica-swallowed mercury, the immortal essences become manifest, by the power of which stability occurs in the body.”

<sup>61</sup> Das Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

<sup>62</sup> *Gorakh Sabadi* 3, in *Gorakh Bānī*, ed. by Pitambaradatta Bharathwal (Prayag, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, 1961).

<sup>63</sup> *Tīrthas* (√*tṛ*: “cross over, ford”) are cosmologically conceived, in *bhakti*, as points at which, by virtue of the god who resides in those places, the devotee may, by bathing, cross over from one state of being (existence, *samsāra*) to a higher state (liberation, *mokṣa*). In yoga, cakra as *tīrtha* is the point at which the Kuṇḍalinī, by crossing it, causes the yogin to accede to a higher yogic state.

<sup>64</sup> *Pīṭhas* are “seats” where the goddess (or parts of her body) is located on earth, along with her consort, who is generally Bhairava (see note 47). Bhairava was an important form of Śiva for many of the traditions under study here, including alchemy, Nāth panth, Śākta yoga etc. For the origins of the Śākta pīṭhas and the names of the Bhairavas who dwell with the goddess at her pīṭhas, see Sircar, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-7 and *passim*.

<sup>65</sup> Sir John Woodroffe, *The Serpent Power* (Madras, Ganesh and Company, 1973), p. 248.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111; and Varenne, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

<sup>67</sup> Woodroffe, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>68</sup> Van Kooij, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>70</sup> Woodroffe, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

<sup>71</sup> *Rasopaniṣat* 18:54. The origin myth of mercury also makes explicit the association of mercury, *amṛta* and Śiva's seed.

<sup>72</sup> *Gorakh Sabadi* 23.

<sup>73</sup> Cited in Van Kooij, *op. cit.*, p. 27. The goddess' body of red arsenic also has the power to transmute, cf. Van Kooij, p. 26 and *Kālikā Purāṇa* 64:72-75.

<sup>74</sup> Van Kooij, *op. cit.*, p. 11 and *Kālikā Purāṇa* 55:15-18. On *dīkṣā*, see Eliade (1977: 108): “...the old initiation ritual (of *dīkṣā*), which effected the symbolic return to the embryo followed by rebirth into a higher spiritual level (“divinization”, “immortalization”) was interpreted by traditional medicine as a means to rejuvenation and designated by a term (*rasāyana*) which came to designate alchemy...”

<sup>75</sup> The six cakras (“psychochemical centers”) are the *Mūlādhāra* (earth), *Svādhiṣṭhāna* (water), *Maṇipura* (fire), *Anāhata* (air), *Viśuddha* (ether), and *Sahasrāra* (*śūnya* = “the void” = Brahman).

<sup>76</sup> *Mātrkā* has the (intended) double sense of “mother” and (acoustic) matrix, as there exists at each *cakra* a form of the mother goddess (at her pīṭha) whose name has as its root or matrix one of the mystic syllables used in meditation.

<sup>77</sup> As the moon is *Soma*, the equation with *amṛta* is a natural one.

<sup>78</sup> Woodroffe, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

<sup>79</sup> Eliade (1954: 246), and Woodroffe, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

<sup>80</sup> The mounting of the six cakras would seem to be analogous with killing mercury six times. See notes 42 and 43.

<sup>81</sup> Eliade (1954: 248); and Woodroffe, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

<sup>82</sup> *Gorakh Sabadi* 57, 123.

<sup>83</sup> *Rājā Rāṇi Saṃvād* of Gopīcand, in *Nāth Siddhant kī Bāṇīyām*, ed. by Hajariprasad Dvivedi (Benares, Nagaripracarini Sabha, 1964), pp. 18-19.

<sup>84</sup> *Gorakh Sabadi* 88.

<sup>85</sup> *Ulaṭā* is the turning back of ontogenic time, such that one becomes as a child again. Cf. *Gorakh Sabadi* 1, 52 and 92.

<sup>86</sup> *Gorakh Sabadi* 55, 67.

<sup>87</sup> Woodroffe, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

<sup>88</sup> *Gorakh Sabadi* 19, 49, 60.

<sup>89</sup> Kaviraj, *op. cit.*, pp. 235-236.

<sup>90</sup> George Weston Briggs, *Gorakhnath and the Kanphata Yogis* (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1973), pp. 179-207.

<sup>91</sup> Das Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

<sup>92</sup> *Gorakh Sabadi* 219.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 141; Briggs, *op. cit.*, pp. 333-334. “-olī” is probably a shortening of the Sanskrit -ālaya, which means “the place, depository of”. *Vajra-* is “diamond”; *Amara-* is “immortality”; and *Sahaja-* may refer to the Vaiṣṇavite Tantric *Sahajīya* sect.

<sup>95</sup> See note 41.

<sup>96</sup> It is possible that the name for preceptor (*guru*) in these traditions takes its original meaning (“heavy”) from this ultimate end of maximum density and impenetrability.

<sup>97</sup> Edmund Leach, *Genesis as myth and other essays* (London, Grossman, 1969), pp. 8-9.

## VASIṢṬHA: RELIGIOUS PERSONALITY AND VEDIC CULTURE

ELLISON BANKS FINDLY

The Vasiṣṭha material in the Ṛgveda is among the most intriguing and complex of any found in the Family Books. Traditional analyses of these hymns have focused on several issues: the early configuration of Vasiṣṭha's rivalry with the priest Viśvāmitra,<sup>1</sup> the historical details of the *dāśarājñá* battle and Vasiṣṭha's role in Sudās' victory,<sup>2</sup> and the mythological ramifications of the story of his divine birth.<sup>3</sup> These investigations have attempted, primarily, to do two things: first, to piece together and clarify the descriptive details of the traditional accounts and, second, to relate these accounts to the increasingly complex mythico-historical system as it evolved during the Vedic and Hindu periods. There have been, however, only a few attempts to examine the development of Vasiṣṭha, himself a religious personality, or to evaluate his religious contributions to Vedic culture.

Of the more recent discussions of Vasiṣṭha and Aryan culture, that of K. R. Potdar describes the tradition of the Vasiṣṭha family as one which values, most often, what is conservative and theologically normative in nature. Potdar points out, for instance, that in shaping early Indian culture the Vasiṣṭha family encouraged "purity of behavior and means...[over against] end[s]," a "partiality for truthfulness," and a consequent firm belief "that [because] gods were on the side of truth" "the devotional approach" to the gods was optimal.<sup>4</sup> Consonant with this emphasis on upright (and perhaps conformist) behavior, Potdar interprets the Vasiṣṭhas as a family which values "the fairness of ... [the] family name remaining untarnished," "the continuity of the family line and family traditions" and a general sense of the optimism and happiness of family life which could in turn give rise, perhaps out of a sense of *noblesse oblige*, to "the idea of sharing [one's own] prosperity with a liberal mind and hand with other members of the society."<sup>5</sup>

Potdar's vision of the Vasiṣṭhas as shaping an ethical and social elitism (a vision of considerable merit when taken in the context of the familial contention and scurry for social status rife in ancient India) is complemented by Dandekar's work: first, Vasiṣṭha's delineation of the classical doctrine of *bhakti* in the seventh *maṇḍala* hymns to Varuṇa attributed to him and, second, his pivotal efforts in the shaping of a compromise between an early Varuṇa-cult and a newer Indra-cult. Dandekar points out that the *bhakti* hymns of the Vasiṣṭha cycle are important for two reasons: first, they undermine "the long out-dated theory regarding the doctrine of *bhakti* having been originally borrowed from some non-Indian [sic] sources" and, second, they show "most of the essential characteristics of the classical doctrine of *bhakti*."<sup>6</sup> According to Dandekar it was out of this experience of *bhakti* that Vasiṣṭha became essential in the conciliation of the Indra- and Varuṇa-cults and especially in "averting a schism in the Vedic community" by demonstrating "that Varuṇa and Indra were not antagonistic to each other but...essentially complementary. 'Indra conquers and Varuṇa rules.'"<sup>7</sup>

These two types of analyses, of the contribution of the Vasiṣṭha family (1961) and of the original ancestor (1969), are important for their clarification of the history of the early religion. They do not, however, go far enough and could be easily extended by the methodological concerns of psychohistory, whose insights have considerable bearing on our assessment of the person Vasiṣṭha and the function of his story as a central religious narrative within the tradition. Although a traditional (Eriksonian) psychohistory of Vasiṣṭha is impossible because of the paucity of source material, and may be somewhat inappropriate given the traditional Hindu concerns for anonymity and ahistoricity, insights from psychohistorical literature may be helpful in the on-going development of Vasiṣṭha studies.

### *Personality and Culture*

The field now called psychohistory is relatively new as a self-conscious methodology and as it delineates an interdisciplinary territory that is both consonant with and yet sufficiently independent of other related fields to warrant its own journals and professional

associations.<sup>8</sup> Inaugurated in 1957-58 by an historian, Walter Langer, and a psychoanalyst, Erik Erikson,<sup>9</sup> and reminiscent of the “psychography” of Gamaliel Bradford which tried to “capture the ‘psychology’ of the subject in a relatively succinct thematic statement,”<sup>10</sup> psychohistory is “the utilization of a particular psychological theory...to interpret selected personalities or events of the past.”<sup>11</sup>

Its basic postulate is that, in life history, the meaning of any event traumatic or otherwise, cannot be ascertained by any unidimensional means but can be derived only by a careful and systematic consideration of the event’s place in a recurrent motivational theme which becomes clear by constantly moving back and forth between the individual’s life history, his community, and the community’s history.<sup>12</sup>

As a discipline, psychohistory is not without its critics, but the debate between its major detractors and proponents over the last several decades<sup>13</sup> has produced a substantial volume of literature<sup>14</sup> out of which some important critical concerns have emerged. In the work of Erikson, for instance, one of the leading architects of the field, materials are explained in terms of syndromes of conflict,<sup>15</sup> that is, as they are related to each of Erikson’s eight developmental stages,<sup>16</sup> and as they follow the “epigenetic” principle: “that psychological functioning unfolds according to a biologically grounded master plan that is both evolutionary and social in character.”<sup>17</sup> Moreover, following Erikson’s lead, there is much in the current literature that recognizes “recurrent motivational themes in the life history of an original man,”<sup>18</sup> a type of analysis called the “theme-recurrence” approach. While there are other methodological and ideological concerns in psychohistorical literature, not the least of which deals with the normative rather than the explanatory issue (i.e., what man *should* be),<sup>19</sup> this essay will focus primarily on the use of recurrent themes as explanatory tools in the life of Vasiṣṭha.

Because of its scanty nature, the Vasiṣṭha material of the R̥gveda does not facilitate a straightforward psychohistory, nor even some good guesses as to the developmental placement of crises or epigenetic stages. We cannot even, as Pruyser has suggested for some cases, tolerate “certain gaps in the history” or rely discerningly on “unreliable informants”<sup>20</sup> in constructing a

psychoanalytic narrative. We have, then, to turn to other areas of the psychohistorical enterprise for an informative evaluation of Vasiṣṭha, areas charted out by Freud in fact in his analyses of the tensions between tradition and modernity, between personal fulfillment and an oppressive social order, and between religion and science.<sup>21</sup> In Waud Kracke's analysis of Erikson's contributions, anthropology plays a significant role, for culture is, in the end, the essential context in which personal development takes place. Here Erikson's notion of identity becomes central: "*How do people integrate values and shared symbols into their personalities?*"<sup>22</sup> As Erikson notes, identity and ideology are complementary parts of the same process, for he defines ideology as "the tendency at a given time to make facts amenable to ideas, and ideas to facts, in order to create a world image convincing enough to support the collective and the individual sense of identity."<sup>23</sup> In understanding the identity process as an adaptation of the developing personality to its surrounding culture, we see on the one hand that "ideology emerges as a powerfully constructive force in the sustaining of identity,"<sup>24</sup> but on the other that, in the case of a few timely and gifted people, the identity process can itself have a powerful effect on the shaping of the contemporary culture. It is here that Erikson's notion of the "religious actualist," the *homo religiosus*, will become so important in the analysis of Vasiṣṭha, for

The real impact of...greatness...lies in the fact that what could be externalized of his own inner turmoil became the turmoil not only of history, but also internally reflected in the religious consciousness and experience of countless millions...so...that [his] inner struggle resonated with the inner conflicts, doubts, and suppressed hostilities and ambivalences of many.<sup>25</sup>

While we must recognize, with Ruth Benedict, that culture contains a whole range of personalities and that "a culture cannot be portrayed on the basis of a single informant,"<sup>26</sup> there are as Erikson recognized those exceptional persons whose psychological development and cultural milieu are so harmonious that they can (and indeed must) become truly innovative. In examining such an "actualist," that is, a man who makes "his inner voice consonant with the trend of human history,"<sup>27</sup> we will be mindful that process is central to the interaction of personality and culture,<sup>28</sup> and that such interaction has to be set within historical and developmental

configurations. Even when there is, as Erikson notes, the “beginning of an official identity, the moment when life suddenly becomes biography,”<sup>29</sup> the myth about oneself (one’s own or that of others’) must be seen as constantly changing as it intersects with the dynamic and continuing process of culture change.

We find in Eriksonian analysis, as well, the use of psychohistory as narrative, and particularly as religious narrative. Johnson has suggested that the psychohistorical account itself can be a theological system in disguise, charting a course of human development that carries with it a saga of mortal perfection.<sup>30</sup> Johnson’s contribution has been to point out that in the Eriksonian case, as in religious narratives of the past, such stories no matter how scientific their intent, “do distort the past to an unusual degree for the sake of the present.”<sup>31</sup> The psychohistorian as storyteller, then, becomes lay theologian. In the case of the Vasiṣṭha narrative this will be especially true, for in their cryptic descriptions of the crises and events in the lives of Vasiṣṭha and the Vasiṣṭha family, the early texts reflect a stance that is less historically *descriptive* and more ideologically *prescriptive*. As in the case of Erikson’s discussion of Luther and Gandhi, we will find that the Vasiṣṭha narrative tells us less what was and more what should be.

#### *Victory and Stability: Rivalry with Viśvāmitra and the Ten Kings’ Battle*

In bringing to the Vasiṣṭha story some insights from psychohistory, especially from its focus on personality and culture, we will examine three themes which indicate the presence of crises in the ancestral Vasiṣṭha’s life to which he made successful resolution and from which there was not only successful adaptation for himself, but successful cultural transformation made by him and his family for others as well. These three themes—his role in the victory of King Sudās over the Ten Kings, in shaping patterns of lineage and priestly ordination, and in the conciliation of the Varuṇa and Indra cults—do not fall easily into a chronological pattern but are themes central at least to the early R̥gvedic material. In our discussion of each of these three themes, we will focus not only on an understanding of the nature of the crisis and its resolution, but on the way in which the tradition’s understanding of the event reflects pivotal themes in the ideology of ancient India.

The details of the Ten Kings Battle, which the early tradition sees as essential to the understanding of Vasiṣṭha, fall against a background of hostility with Viśvāmitra that is only obliquely reflected in the Ṛgveda. Although important to evaluating the reasons for and alliances in the battle, the Viśvāmitra issue is, for whatever reason, not central to the Ṛgvedic narrative and hence less significant than other issues in considering the early tradition's assessment of Vasiṣṭha's impact on itself. Nevertheless, the Viśvāmitra fragments are, as background, informative for our concerns. While Oldenberg holds that the hostility is not to be found in the Ṛgveda<sup>32</sup> and that there is no organizational connection between stories in different sources, it seems clear to Geldner, for instance, who lays more stress on the post-Ṛgvedic tradition, that 7.104 is Vasiṣṭha's counter attack, often word for word, to 3.53.21-24, the traditional *vasiṣṭhadveṣiṇyaḥ* of Viśvāmitra.<sup>33</sup> In both instances the enemy is unnamed, but Lommel has correctly assessed the situation in 7.104 as follows: Der Ungenannte, aber den Hörern gewiss nicht Unbekannte, von dem die verleumderischen Vorwürfe ausgehen, ist gemeint, wenn in Einzahl der Unhold (Str. 1) der Bösredende (2.4), der Übertäter (7) verwünscht wird; ... Sie (the words of Str. 2) bestätigen, dass dieses Gedicht gegen Viśvāmitra gerichtet ist.<sup>34</sup> One of the overt issues in this textual mud-slinging is that of the religious technique: while each side has apparently called the other a sorcerer (*yātudhāna*; 7.104.15-16),<sup>35</sup> it seems that Viśvāmitra is more likely to have used magic to gain his ends than Vasiṣṭha, who relied primarily upon the high and solemn ritual.<sup>36</sup>

The Anukramaṇī refers to this hymn as a means for slaying demons (*rakṣohān*), and certainly the demonology present is important to the history of early Indian folk religion,<sup>37</sup> but there is more to 7.104 than a simple collection of magical curses. In his analysis, Lommel has offered a reconstruction of the hostility which relies upon accounts in, among others, the Bṛhaddevatā (4.112b ff.) and the Mahābhārata (1.166 ff.). While the early stories focus on a contention over the office of *purōhita* (the personal and family priest) under the patronage of King Sudās, the later ones describe an opposition arising out of the murder (by burning) of Vasiṣṭha's brightest, most pious, and most liturgically eminent son, Śakti,

through the deviousness of Viśvāmitra. As Lommel reconstructs the whole narrative, the hostility began when this son of Vasiṣṭha won over Viśvāmitra, the latter then the *purōhita* of Sudās, during a speaking contest at a great sacrifice. As a consequence, Lommel infers, Viśvāmitra lost his *purōhita*-office and, when the king chose as his next priest the father of the gifted young brahman, Vasiṣṭha, Viśvāmitra's hostility to father and son began in earnest.<sup>38</sup> During Vasiṣṭha's ensuing *purōhita*-ship under Sudās, he helped the king to victory in the Ten Kings Battle. In time, however, Vasiṣṭha fell out with King Sudās reflected, if we believe (as Lommel does)<sup>39</sup> the lively and realistic account in the Mahābhārata, in Śakti putting a curse on the king because he refused to move out of the way on a narrow forest path (MBh.1.166.1-10). With the hostility between the two families still brewing, Viśvāmitra eventually contrived, through the actual handiwork of the Saudāsas (members of the Sudās family), to bring about the burning death of Śakti as he spoke, according to Sarvānukramaṇī 7.32 ff., the last *pragātha* in a sacrifice.<sup>40</sup> The death of his son, and later of "one hundred sons," so saddened Vasiṣṭha (whose grief was to be assuaged perhaps by the malevolent power of 7.104) that he eventually attempted, unsuccessfully because of the intervention of the gods, death by suicide on several occasions. Secondary to this reconstructed narrative account, but central to the psychological development of Vasiṣṭha as depicted by tradition, is the somewhat apocryphal accusation by Viśvāmitra that it was Vasiṣṭha himself who brought about the burning of his own son<sup>41</sup>—an accusation so powerful that Lommel sees in any number of places Vasiṣṭha's attempt to defend himself against such slander.<sup>42</sup>

While most of this "hostility narrative" is unknown or at least unreflected in the R̥gveda, we do have in the early text a relatively generous amount of material about Vasiṣṭha's role in King Sudās' victory in the Ten Kings Battle. This victory theme is essential to the tradition not only because it represents the rise and stabilizing of one of the prominent Vedic families,<sup>43</sup> but because it acts as a symbol of the dominance and superiority of Aryanism both in physical strength and in ritual efficiency. The *dāśarājñā*<sup>44</sup> was a contest between the Tṛtsu clan, led by Sudās Paijavana of North Pañcāla,<sup>45</sup> and a confederation of ten tribes who opposed his

westward progress<sup>46</sup> (a reclamation of lands, it seems, once conquered to the west rather than new victories to the east). The real power among the Tṛtsus, however, was not King Sudās but his *puróhita* Vasiṣṭha,<sup>47</sup> who because of his eloquence and liturgical skills was able to successfully engage the help of Indra. Because Vasiṣṭha had superseded in the office of *puróhita* Viśvāmitra, under whose guidance the Tṛtsus had fought in other battles,<sup>48</sup> it was apparently out of revenge that Viśvāmitra allied the ten tribes together against his old patron King Sudās.

The war as a whole consisted of a number of battles and skirmishes, including a later one on the banks of the Yamunā River, but the decisive battle took place on the banks of the Paruṣṇī River where the ten tribes and their leaders surrounded Sudās and his Tṛtsus.<sup>49</sup> Vasiṣṭha called upon Indra for aid; Indra parted the Paruṣṇī River; the Tṛtsus went across; the ten tribes followed; and the Paruṣṇī swallowed them up and drowned them. The following hymn to Indra, 7.18, a type of *dānástuti* to King Sudās, describes in detail the events of this battle. The author obviously wanted to record all aspects of the event which made him and his family victorious and, even though Vasiṣṭha must have been relatively aged at the time, for his grandson Parāśara (vs. 21) was old enough to fight, his observational powers and memory seem to have been in optimal condition.

1. Indeed, O Indra, our fathers, the singers  
won all their goods from you,  
for yours are the good-milking cows, yours the horses.  
You bring in many provisions for the pious.
2. For, like a king with his wives, you live comfortably forever.  
Be gracious (to us) with each (new) day, O watchful seer!  
Acknowledge (our) songs with cows and horses, O liberal one!  
Urge us, your followers on to riches!
3. These pleasing, god-bound songs go to you,  
having contended in this (our) place.<sup>50</sup>  
Let the way of your riches come here to us.  
In your favor, O Indra, may we find refuge.
4. Like (a calf let loose) to a nursing cow in a beautiful meadow,  
Vasiṣṭha released his formulations to you.  
Only you, everyone tells me, are the lord of cows.  
Let Indra come to us in good favor!

5. Indra made the ever-widening floods  
into passable fords for Sudās.  
For the boastful Śimyu he made (a curse) of the newest song,  
his insulting speech, (he made like) a timber-drift on the rivers.
6. Turvaśa, the Yakṣu, was the first offering,<sup>51</sup>  
The Matsyas<sup>52</sup> were overly eager for riches like (fish for bait) in  
water;  
The Bhṛguś and the Druhyus complied willingly!  
The friend helped him over, who, of the two opponents, was his  
friend.<sup>53</sup>
7. The Pakthas, the Bhalānas, the Alinas, and the Viṣāṇins<sup>54</sup>  
cheered on their good friends.  
The feast companion (= Indra) of the Aryan (= Sudās), who led his  
men in battle,<sup>55</sup>  
came to the Tṛtsus' (aid) lusting for cattle.
8. Because the unwise with evil intention violated Aditi,  
they diverted the Paruṣṇī.<sup>56</sup>  
Possessed of power, (Sudās) embraced the whole earth.  
Like a sacrificial animal he<sup>57</sup> lay there, who thought himself a seer.
9. They came to a false goal as if it were their true goal: the Paruṣṇī.  
In their hurry, they did not reach their night lodging.  
Indra delivered up to Sudās in (the place called) Mānuṣa<sup>58</sup>  
the fugitive enemy of unmanly speech.
10. They went like cows without a shepherd from a field,  
assembled as was usual for a treaty.<sup>59</sup>  
The Prṣnigus, struck down to the earth,  
complied willingly with their teams and possessions (in tribute).
11. Twenty-one peoples from both Vaikarna tribes  
the king (= Indra) smashing down, desiring fame.  
As an expert places strew on the ritual ground, (he struck them  
down).  
The hero Indra made a rush among them.
12. Then the cudgel-bearer struck the old and famous Kavaśa  
into the water; the Druhyu (king) followed,  
while your followers, choosing friendship for friendship,  
intoxicated you (with Soma).
13. In one day Indra split open all their forts,  
the seven citadels, by force.  
He divided up the property of the enemy for the Tṛtsu.  
May we conquer the Pūru who uses abusive speech at the ritual.
14. The Anus and Druhyus, eager for cows,  
sixty hundred, six thousand sixty,  
and again six men died as payment.  
All these heroic deeds were done by Indra.

15. Fully enabled by Indra, those Tṛtsus  
broke forth like waters released downwards.  
The enemies, (now) few in number,  
handed over all their possessions to Sudās.
16. He smashed the presumptuous to the ground,  
that half a man who without Indra drinks the cooked (milk).  
Indra thwarted the intention of the intention-thwarter.  
(The deserter) flees while still having a trace of the way.
17. With the weak he did this singular deed.  
With a ram he slew the lioness.  
With a needle Indra split open the peaks.  
All their possessions he sent to Sudās.
18. “All enemies are subject to you.  
Bring the presumptuous Bheda into bondage!  
He who sins against the praising mortals,  
on him bring down your sharp cudgel, O Indra!”
19. The Yamunā (River) and the Tṛtsus were there beside Indra,  
and there he deprived Bheda of everything.  
The Ajas, the Śigrus, and the Yakṣus  
brought the heads of their horses as tribute.
20. Neither your favors nor your riches, O Indra,  
nor your first or latest (deeds) are to be numbered as few as the  
dawns.  
For you slew the godling, arrogance.  
By your own self, you struck down Śambara from on high.
21. Parāśara, Śatayātu, Vasiṣṭha,<sup>60</sup>  
who for love of you went out from their home,  
did not forget the friendship of you, the hospitable.  
Now happy days shine out to the ritual patrons.
22. Two hundred cows from the grandson of Devavat,  
two wagons together with their teams from Sudās—  
in order to be worthy of these gifts from Paijavana, O Agni,  
I circle them, praising like a Hotar the ritual seat.
23. Four horses given by Paijavana (lead) me—  
well-schooled, adorned with pearls, and for personal use only.  
these ruddy horses of Sudās, stepping firmly on the earth,  
bear me and my children on to fame for my children.
24. He whose fame (spreads) between the two broad worlds.  
who as dispenser hands out (booty) to each and every head,  
him they praise, as the seven streams did Indra.  
He has struck down Yudhyāmadhi in the confrontation of battle.
25. Accompanying him, O men! O Maruts!  
as you did Divodāsa, the father of Sudās!  
Out of esteem, promote the desire of the Paijavana:  
an imperishable, unaging sovereignty!

Structurally, the hymn can be divided into the following sections: vss. 1-4, a standard liturgical introduction praising Indra for his wondrous deeds and requesting in return riches and prosperous lives;<sup>61</sup> vss. 5-20, an historical description of the battle, the Tṛtsu comrades, and their enemies; vs. 21, a generational salute to the Vasiṣṭha family's close relationship with Indra;<sup>62</sup> and vss. 22-25, the *dānāstuti*, in which Vasiṣṭha describes the priestly fee King Sudās paid to him as a result of the battle (vs. 22-23) and praises Sudās as the most righteous, heroic and generous of all royal patrons (vss. 24-25). The most important part of the hymn for our purposes is the central section which, in its detailing of the battle, develops a theme pivotal to our understanding of Vasiṣṭha's role in Vedic culture: Aryan ritual superiority. The eloquence of the priestly Vasiṣṭhas is described in clear contrast to the coarse, inelegant and ineffective speech of their enemies (5cd). The Tṛtsu (= Aryan) enemy does not know the proper ritual language, especially the use of the *brāhmaṇ*, formulation, (9d) and the strong and clearly reaffirmed Tṛtsu alliance with Indra is telling for, as the truly Aryan god, he has the proper, expert knowledge of the ritual which the Tṛtsus have just so aptly put to use (11cd). Moreover, the battle is seen, at least by the Vasiṣṭha composers, not simply as a secular contest between enemy tribes, but as a contest between the powers of truth (*ṛtā*) and those of the unwise (*acetās*) and in which a Tṛtsu victory will vindicate Aditi, truth's guardian (8ab). The ten tribes appear to have a great lack of judgment—the Tṛtsus would never have miscalculated so badly as to be swallowed up by a river (9ab)—and the “shepherd” Viśvāmitra is depicted as hardly the leader needed for the confederation that was Sudās' enemy; in fact, “in all the three hymns of the seventh *Maṇḍala*, narrating the events of the Dāśarājña War, Viśvāmitra is completely out of [the] picture,”<sup>63</sup> as an effective ritual leader and seer. The central portion of the hymn, then, is a detailed delineation of why the Tṛtsus are the favored and chosen people of Indra and thus destined to rule India.

One of the psychohistorical themes<sup>64</sup> Erikson develops in his discussion of the religious man, especially in reference to Gandhi, is the clear sense of moral dominance. Central to the lives of spiritual innovators, says Erikson, is a “precocious and relentless

conscience,”<sup>65</sup> a conscience to which the man is inordinately responsible, but from which he develops an overweening sense of moral superiority. There is, on the one hand, a strong emotional necessity to remain morally unblemished and, on the other, such a conviction of his own superiority, bound in some extraordinary, almost covenantal, way to the transcendent truth, that he places himself in a position of obligatory mediatorship with regard to others.<sup>66</sup> Throughout his life, this sense of moral dominance is intellectualized as a pre-emptive search for ethical clarity about not only who is right, but what is right, and what it means to be right.

We find this sense of moral dominance—this firm belief in one’s own unblemished state, in one’s consistent ethical superiority and in one’s obligatory mediatorship when it comes to judging and correcting others—in Vasiṣṭha for as an exemplar of ancient Indian sagehood, he sees himself as the bearer and transmitter of a superior way of life. The early cultural distinction, so evident in 7.18, is that of Aryan over Dasyu, and the central issue here is that of the Dasyu’s irreligion.<sup>67</sup> As chief architect of the decisive battle in the Aryan conquest of India, at least as recorded in the R̥gveda, Vasiṣṭha is held by the tradition (and perhaps even by his contemporaries) to be one of the prime movers in the establishment of Vedic culture. There is for him, as for his time, no other way than the Aryan way (7.18.16d), effected in this case not by the conversion of deviants, as for Gandhi, but by dominance over them.

Aryan victory over the Dasyu and the ensuing stability of Sudās’ sovereignty over Bharata India with the help of Vasiṣṭha and his family is reflected in Vasiṣṭha’s own personal life. Erikson points out that the hallmark of the *homo religiosus*, of the spiritually sensitive man turned great innovator, is the capacity to impose on his own time what most personally concerns him, a capacity Erikson calls re-enactment. The great man has the gift to re-enact in himself the crises of his era and to bring, in a meaningful way, his own solutions to contemporary culture; by actualizing what is most appropriate for himself he brings into being, in part by gift and in part by circumstance, what is most appropriate for and needed by others. A man of genius, he takes upon himself “an evolutionary and existential curse shared by all”<sup>68</sup> and finds

the one way in which he (and he alone!) can re-enact the past and create a new future in the right medium at the right moment on a sufficiently large scale...(the real) question is not only how such men come to experience the inescapability of an existential curse, but how it comes about that they have the pertinacity and the giftedness to re-enact it in a medium communicable to their fellow men and meaningful in their stage of history.<sup>60</sup>

Of Vasiṣṭha's inner struggles we know, among others, one thing: that, however he got there (even accepting the reconstruction of Śakti's role in his father's ascendance), it was significant to him and to his family to win out over Viśvāmitra as the chosen personal priest of Sudās. For Vasiṣṭha, as Lommel's exegesis of 7.104 so aptly shows, one of the most personal issues was that of his own "election," of his being especially chosen because of certain innate qualities, to hold what came to be the most prominent intellectual post of his time.<sup>70</sup> Just as for the Aryans, for whom the issue of their "election," of their being the specially chosen of the Vedic gods, was at the heart of their conquest of India, so also was "rightness" a significant issue for Vasiṣṭha, not only in the solidification of his own vocation but in the exact pattern that vocation would take as well. In this way the Ten King's Battle became symbolic. Although it was not the event which actually gave Vasiṣṭha his position as Sudās' *puróhita*, through phrases such as 7.83.4d which describe the results of the battle—"The *puróhita*-office of the Tṛtsus (i.e. of Vasiṣṭha) proved true (*satyá*)"—it is clear that the battle validated Vasiṣṭha's own claim to and retention of the office.<sup>71</sup> The outcome of the battle, then, brought two arenas into accord, for it showed that if Vasiṣṭha could actualize the basis for his own "election" with Sudās (i.e., his priestly eloquence and ability to call upon the gods), then the election of the Aryans would become clear as well. And both, in fact, were once again established in the course of the *dāśarājñá*.

#### *Continuity and Status: Hereditary Ordination and Divine Birth*

The historical events of 7.18 are reflected in a second hymn, 7.33, written some time (perhaps a generation) after the first. 7.33 is not, as the earlier hymn was, a praise of Indra, but a praise of the original Vasiṣṭha priest, now dead, made at the ordination of the new Vasiṣṭha priest. In the intervening time between the composition of 7.18 and 33, three significant changes have taken place. First, the Vasiṣṭha tradition's understanding of itself has become

mythologized. In 7.18 the account of the battle is as “historical” as anything in the *Ṛgveda*;<sup>72</sup> the overwhelming quality of the narrative is as if an eyewitness were describing the event in person. Note the detailed list of enemies, the itemized account of who fell into the water and who fled, and the particulars of the tribute that was paid; the description is immediate, specific, and fast moving. In 7.33, however, the account of the battle is not in the journalistic present, but is instead a recollection from memory, a projection into the (mythic) past of a now idealized event. Verses 1-6 below have few details of the battle but stress even more the special favor Indra showed the Vasiṣṭhas over other peoples. It is this sense of election, amplified as the Vasiṣṭhas increasingly view themselves within history, which distinguishes the 7.33 account from the more narrative one of 7.18. Furthermore, the Vasiṣṭha of 7.18 is like any other historical figure: as one of the main participants in the event, he exhibits the broad range of human strengths and weaknesses. By the time of the composition of 7.33, however, the ancestral Vasiṣṭha has become a superhuman figure, the object around whom legends of divinity grow. Although still remembered as the heroic protagonist of the battle, he has become separate and apart from other men and is now newly discovered to be of divine birth.

There are, secondly, socio-cultural changes which have taken place during the interval, particularly an elevation of the priest (*brahmán*) over the warrior (*kṣatriya*). 7.18 reflects an earlier time in the Aryan conquest of India when the warrior, and war, were dominant for 7.18 is concerned with winning a battle, with overcoming enemies, and with procuring the physical blessings of a prosperous life. Man’s enemies at this time are external: human threats to his physical livelihood and well-being. In 7.33, however, it is the priest who is dominant, as is his main concern, peace. The latter hymn, as we will see, is concerned with establishing the longevity and continuity of a priestly line, and with the preservation of a family priestly tradition. Here, man’s enemies are internal: the chaos and disorder which threaten a society if it were to become devoid of a sense of history and of the uniqueness of its own tradition.

Again, Indra in 7.18 is a war god, a doer of wonderful deeds, a divine actor who miraculously appears at times of stress to save his worshippers.<sup>73</sup> In 7.33, however, Indra still does great deeds, but

he is increasingly endowed with his own thoughts and even, perhaps, with a conscience (7.33.1). The attribution of mind to Indra, over and above his legendary brute strength, indicates the increasing infiltration of priestly concerns into the myth-making process, a development that will culminate in the Upaniṣad's singular focus on the intelligent self. The growing specialization of roles for kings and seers seen in 7.33 reflects the intensified preoccupation of kings with ruling settled countries and towns, and of seers with attending to spiritual matters in the forest. 7.33 also reflects, however, a solidification of socio-ritual status with the increasing prominence of the priest over the king.<sup>74</sup>

The real issue, however, is that during the intervening generation there has been an internalization of spiritual qualities in the sage. In 7.18, the *ṛṣi* is merely a technician of the sacred who, through his technical knowledge of imagery, meter, and liturgical procedure, can manipulate the gods by proper performance of the ritual and ritual speech. The focus here is primarily on the god's deeds; we see little of the priest except that he is the one who called upon Indra. In 7.33, however, the sage is not only a technician, but as a maker of speech his is the very power of salvation itself. It is not just Indra's strength but Vasiṣṭha's skilled formulation (*brāhman*) which saves the Tṛtsus. Without the formulation, Indra would, or rather could, not have been impelled into service on behalf of King Sudās.

Most important, however, is that religious consciousness has been radically transformed. In 7.18, the sage focuses on the division of people into "good" and "bad," with the decisive issue being who has and knows the proper use of the ritual. Note that in 7.18.5cd, 9d, 13d, 16ab, 18c, and in such other verses as 7.83.1, Aryan is divided from Dasyu, the Tṛtsus from the ten tribes, on the basis of the knowledgeable eloquence of one and the arrogant yet ignorant babble of the other. The central concern of 7.33, however, is no longer the simply comprehended and easily concluded issue of a world divided into good and evil, but rather the internal cohesion of the priestly tradition. As the warrior's fear of physical threat is replaced by the priest's fear of social and religious chaos, spirituality is internalized, with a most remarkable growth of priestly self-consciousness: a consciousness that it is the priest himself who must

be the bearer of tradition. This new evaluation of the priestly role goes hand in hand with the new self-awareness the sage has of himself, symbolized most obviously in verses such as 7.33.1 below with the affirmation of the peculiar physical qualities of the Vasiṣṭha family. The development of religious sensitivity in 7.33, therefore, is linked most intricately with the development of a certain self-consciousness, and with the establishment and preservation of a newly clarified sense of who the sage is and must be.

7.33 belongs to a ritual for the installation of a new priest in the Vasiṣṭha line and functions there to renew and restore pride in the Vasiṣṭha family tradition. In order to do so, the author(s) has interwoven past (mythical) time with present (historical) time, in such a way that the past is recreated (or at least remembered) in the ritual present, and the participants are able to move with ease through the events of both eras. To facilitate this process, the hymn employs a repertoire of sophisticated images and a dramatic structure quite unlike the purely narrative one of 7.18.

The main event in 7.33 is not the Ten Kings Battle, which is by now considered old news, but the birth of the ancestral Vasiṣṭha from the two great philosophical gods, Mitra and Varuṇa. According to the tale, Mitra and Varuṇa both saw the Asparas Urvaśī at a ritual. They forgot themselves and let their seed fall into a jar. From out of the jar Vasiṣṭha and his younger brother Agastya were born.<sup>75</sup> It is this focus on Vasiṣṭha, and not the battle and Indra's aid, which establishes the Anukramaṇī dedication of 7.33 to the Vasiṣṭha and not to Indra.<sup>76</sup>

Indra:

1. "The white-clad awakeners of (pious) thoughts with hair braided on the right<sup>77</sup>  
have indeed come (far from their house) on a pilgrimage to me.  
As I stand up from the strew, I announce to the men:  
'I cannot help my Vasiṣṭhas from afar.' "<sup>78</sup>
2. Out of the distance they led Indra here with their Soma,  
past (others' Soma) pouring into pools, beyond (others') strong  
(Soma) drink.  
To the pressed Soma of Pāśadyumna Vāyata  
Indra preferred that of the Vasiṣṭhas.<sup>79</sup>
3. Indeed, did he not cross the river with them?  
Indeed, did he not strike down Bheda with them?  
Indeed, at the Ten Kings Battle did not Indra  
help Sudās because of your formulation, O Vasiṣṭhas?

Indra:

4. “Out of love for your forefathers, O men!  
I tied up the axelshaft with your formulation.  
Saying ‘You shall certainly come to no harm!  
with a loud roar in Śakvarī meter<sup>80</sup>  
you Vasiṣṭhas put strength in Indra.’”
5. In their need, those surrounded at the Ten Kings Battle  
looked up like thirsty animals toward heaven.  
Indra heard the praising Vasiṣṭha and  
freed a passage for the Tṛtsus.
6. Like sticks for driving cattle  
the weak Bharatas were broken.  
As Vasiṣṭha was their leader,  
the Tṛtsu clans spread out.
7. Three make seed among the creatures.  
There are three Aryan creations which give off light.  
Three heats accompany dawn:  
all these the Vasiṣṭhas know.<sup>81</sup>
8. Their light is like the increase of the sun (at dawn),  
their greatness is bottomless like that of the sea.  
Like the swiftness of the wind is your praise, O Vasiṣṭhas!  
not to be overtaken by anyone else.
9. With insights from their heart  
they penetrate the thousand-branched secret.<sup>82</sup>  
Weaving again the enclosure spanned by Yama  
the Vasiṣṭhas reverence the Apsaras.
10. When Mitra and Varuṇa saw you  
as light springing forth from lightning,  
that was your birth, O Vasiṣṭha, and yet there was another:  
when Agastya presented you to the (Tṛtsu) clans.
11. And you, Vasiṣṭha, are the son of Mitra and Varuṇa,  
born from the (mere) thought of Urvaśī, O formulator!  
As the drop sprinkled down during the divine formulation,  
all the gods caught you in a lotus.
12. He, suspecting the double (birth), knew beforehand;  
he has a thousand gifts, has always had gifts.  
Vasiṣṭha was born from the Apsaras  
in order to weave the enclosure spanned by Yama.
13. At a long Soma festival, and excited by the homages,  
they both spilled their seed into a jar.  
From out of the middle Māna (= Agastya) came forth;  
then, they say, the sage Vasiṣṭha was born.

Agastya:

14. “He supports the hymn-bearer, the verse-bearer.

Carrying the pressing stone, he shall speak first.  
 Reverence him sympathetically;  
 for unto you, Pratr̥ds,<sup>83</sup> may Vasiṣṭha come!”

Verses 1-6 are a projection into the past of the Ten Kings Battle and Indra’s aid, in which the “voice” of Indra alternates with a priestly chorus describing exactly how Indra responded to the original Vasiṣṭha’s call for help. This section emphasizes Indra’s election of the Tr̥tsus on the basis of their eloquence. Verses 7-9 are a series of ritual riddles, important in this hymn because correct knowledge of ritual technique and symbolism is what makes the Vasiṣṭhas eligible for divine favor and is what is at the core of the family tradition to be passed on at this installation. Moreover, we see evidence here of the rapid growth in ritual praxis with specific reference in verse 7 to the three fires, called the Āhavanīya, the Gārhapatya and the Dakṣiṇāgni in later literature.<sup>84</sup> The Vasiṣṭhas, as other Vedic priests, attribute the maintenance of the natural world to proper care of these fires within “the enclosure spanned by Yama” (9c), that is, within the ritual ground. Finally, verses 10-14 detail the new Vasiṣṭha myth and the installation of the new priest. In verse 10, the poet lays the ground for the “double birth” of every priest by describing the two births of the original Vasiṣṭha: his original, though clearly mythical, birth from divine parents, and his ritual rebirth into the priestly vocation. Verse 14 is spoken by Vasiṣṭha’s mythical brother as the new priest is presented to the clans he will now serve.<sup>85</sup>

7.33 is an excellent hymn for psychohistorical examination for, although we may see little of the ancestral Vasiṣṭha’s own inner struggles, we see a great deal of the struggles among the Vasiṣṭhas of the next generation as they, in their formation of a corporate personality, respond to the growing pains of the culture around them. Erikson identifies two elements which are particularly appropriate to the evidence of 7.33. First, there is an acute and immediate consciousness of one’s own death which forces the *homo religiosus* to live continuously before this fact and to make his own life choices in light of it. Furthermore, because it is death “which gives all humanity a joint identity,”<sup>86</sup> the religiosity of these men is based, as well, on a love for all men as equally mortal. Quite often, and this is the case with the Vasiṣṭhas, man experiences this movement

between life and death, past and future, as a matter of the turnover of generations.<sup>87</sup> The safety and optimistic reaffirmation of man's procreative skills that is afforded by the "generational complex" is, as a resolution to the problem of death, eminently appropriate to Vedic culture and is uniquely reflected in the immortalization of the Vasiṣṭha family.

Second, Erikson finds the religiosity of great men bound to their appropriation of themes of fatherhood and sonship, by which one faces the problem of not only whose son one is, but also whose father. The father-son theme, "found at critical times in the lives of all great innovators as an intrinsic part of their inner transformation,"<sup>88</sup> brings a man abruptly before those whom he must replace and surpass as an adult and is, for this reason, the factor most torn with conflict.

...a highly uncommon man experiences filial conflicts with such mortal intensity just because he already senses in himself early in childhood some kind of originality that seems to point beyond competition with the personal father.<sup>89</sup>

For Gandhi, as for others, one's vocation is the vehicle by which to surpass and replace the father as well as to renew and revitalize "the professional heritage of ... father and ... forefathers."<sup>90</sup> As he moves beyond a resolution with the immediately preceding generation, the *homo religiosus* searches, as Erikson says, "for the father and the son who might match the enormity of existence,"<sup>91</sup> that is, he must come to terms not only with the problem of spiritual and psychic authority but also with that of intellectual and cultural inheritance.

These two themes find acute expression in 7.33. Although surrounded by the fact of death in conflicts such as the Ten Kings Battle and in the daily hardships of building up a settled civilization, Vasiṣṭha and his family come to terms with death not only by acknowledging the succession of generations, but also by making the continuity of family a special concern, and by tying that concern to the vocational patterns of priesthood. As early as 7.18.1-4, for instance, Vasiṣṭha reminds Indra of the tradition of aid he has given to the ancestral singers in the family<sup>92</sup> and, in the *dānāstuti* coda of 7.18 (vss. 22-25), Vasiṣṭha takes pride in his priestly fee not only for himself but also on behalf of his descendants who stand to share in

the fame of his priestly heroics, as well as in the wealth he has brought them. By 7.33, however, as perhaps in 3.53 of the Viśvāmitras, 5.40 of the Atris and 6.47 of the Bhāradvājas,<sup>93</sup> the focus on the permanence of the family is more than just a strong desire for its continuity and consistency over time, it approaches a ritual divinization of the whole Vasiṣṭha line. By coupling a sense of the uniqueness of the Vasiṣṭhas<sup>94</sup> with an unusual dramatic structure, the author(s) has created a means by which the Vasiṣṭhas can be (re-)immortalized every time the hymn is performed at a ritual. Death is conquered, then, not just by the reverencing of the forefathers, or by the procreation of new aspirants to the priestly art, but by a continual reminder of familial singularity and by a ritual effectuation, time and time again, of those things which have made the Vasiṣṭha family immortal: the relationship with Indra and the divine birth of its ancestor. Adaptation to Vedic culture has meant, then, that as the culture settles into more fixed and complex socio-economic patterns, Vasiṣṭha family identity will not only remain in tact but will be a model for family (and priestly) patterns throughout the countryside.

The theme of fatherhood and sonship by which great men deal with authority and generativity is expressed in 7.33 in a concern over the ancestral Vasiṣṭha's births. Most of the mythologizing which surrounds Vasiṣṭha focuses on the issue of who his parents were. According to the myth, Vasiṣṭha has two fathers who were both great gods and no mother, despite the fact that Urvaśī was responsible for and present at his birth. Throughout his life Vasiṣṭha was obliged, then, like any good son, to carry out the will of these great parents: the preservation of *ṛtá* or moral truth among the peoples of the Aryan nation. 7.33 records, however, another birth: by his ordination into the priesthood, Vasiṣṭha is thought to be "born again" (vs. 10). The focus here is not just on who his father or parents were or on the glorification of the Vasiṣṭha lineage and its extraordinary ties to the gods of morality, particularly to Varuna.<sup>95</sup> Instead, it is on Vasiṣṭha's priesthood and his role as ritual servant to the Aryans.

We have, then, on the one hand, Vasiṣṭha's physical birth: first, from his real parents of the Vasiṣṭha family and, second, from his spiritual parents, the gods Mitra and Varuṇa. In the first instance,

he is beholden to the Vasiṣṭha family to be a “good son” by preserving the priestly tradition; in the second instance, he becomes a “good son” to Mitra and Varuṇa by preserving *ṛtá*. It is also important to the ancestral Vasiṣṭha, as well as to his descendants, to improve on the past, not to be bound by the weaknesses of the forefathers, but continually to heal the tradition: “From the sins of our fathers release us! And from those which we ourselves have done!” (7.86.5ab). On the other hand, however, there is Vasiṣṭha’s spiritual rebirth: a second birth which occurs at his ordination and through which he becomes a true and proper “father” to those who need his religious services, that is, to the true Aryan worshipper. As Dange says, “if the birth is to be for the benefit of the earthly people, it has to be had in the sacrificial atmosphere.”<sup>96</sup> It is this second birth which, more than any other, unites the lineage of Vasiṣṭha priests, for in each new generation the spiritual rebirth is re-enacted and this special mode of “fathering” is renewed.<sup>97</sup> In finding in the hereditary ordination of the priesthood a resolution to the father-son theme, Vasiṣṭha and his family also move beyond ordinary selfish family concerns for, like Gandhi, they now minister unto the culture at large.

In our earlier review of the theme of victory and stability in the life of Vasiṣṭha, we focused on the notion of moral (and ritual) dominance as central to the distinction between Aryan and Dasyu. Moral dominance is also important as the Vasiṣṭhas establish patterns of continuity, and particularly as they develop notions of status. In 7.33 we find an affirmation of sage over king, of the contemplative lifestyle over the active lifestyle, of the knowledge of ritual and language over the knowledge of chariots and horses. Often enough the Vasiṣṭha hymns praise priestly knowledge of the ritual, celebrate the wise insights of the early poet which fathom and preserve *ṛtá*, “truth,” and describe the new fame of those who follow the priestly way.<sup>98</sup> This elevation of the contemplative lifestyle and the subsequent belief in one’s personal closeness to the transcendent truth, is symbolized in the fact the Vasiṣṭhas frequently mention themselves in the last verse of their hymns—reminding the gods that it is the Vasiṣṭhas, and none others, who have sent such beautiful praises and who deserve the most bountiful blessings.<sup>99</sup> Again as with Gandhi, the development of a sense of

“rightness” has more to do with the dominance of a certain set of mores or customs, namely Aryan and subsequently priestly ones, than it has with the dominance of individual values.

*Conciliation over Rejection: The Indra- and Varuṇa-cults*

In Dandekar’s discussion of Vasiṣṭha’s role as a religious conciliator in the encounter between the ancient Varuṇa-cult and the new Indra-cult, he notes, first, how deliberate efforts were made to emphasize the separate yet complementary spheres of the two gods and, second, how in the process of conciliation Varuṇa was transformed into the kind of god India needed at the time. Of the hymns in the Ṛgveda devoted to the dual divinity Indrāvaruṇau,<sup>100</sup> the most helpful in understanding the relationship between the two gods are, according to Dandekar, those in the Vasiṣṭha *maṇḍala*. In these hymns, particularly in 7.82, Indra is characterized as “the national war-god...invoked for help in battles and wars” while Varuṇa is “the upholder of law and order... [invoked] in connection with the promotion of the activities of peace.”<sup>101</sup> Both together, then, “promote the world-process,”<sup>102</sup> for while Indra conquers, Varuṇa rules (7.83.9ab). Not only do these hymns separate and allocate different functions to each god, but special attention is paid to the function of Varuṇa for he is “responsible for law and order not only in the cosmic sense but also in the socio-ethical sense.”<sup>103</sup> Moreover,

Varuṇa was concerned more or less exclusively with the establishment of peace and good will not only within the Vedic Aryan community but also between the Vedic community and those who were strangers to that community but who might, for one reason or another, be acceptable to the community.<sup>104</sup>

Of Varuṇa, for instance, these hymns say:

“You [we call] for the attainment of peace.” (7.82.4b)

“Mitra presents Varuṇa with peace.” (7.82.5c)

“[He] presides constantly over the laws.” (7.83.9b)

“[He] keeps the chosen people in order.” (7.85.3c)

Vasiṣṭha’s assistance in the delineation of separate spheres for each god comes at the expense, however, of moving beyond the

singular promotion of a god with whom he has had a personal and intimate relationship. We know, also from Dandekar, that it is around Varuṇa that many of the early panegyrics with *bhaktic* content are spun, and that it is Vasiṣṭha who, at least from the Ṛgvedic evidence, is one of the central figures in this early confessional cult.<sup>105</sup> Hymns like 7.86, for instance, demonstrate that Vasiṣṭha's own religious preference tends toward the contemplative experience which has at its core an intense and often heated relationship with a morally demanding god.<sup>106</sup> From all indications, Vasiṣṭha's personal propensities towards a heightened conscience and terrorizing thoughts of sin are central to our understanding of a type of early Indian religiosity not highly developed as the Vedic period becomes more complex:

Vasiṣṭha was...deeply conscious of his moral ineligibility for a communion with Varuṇa. He knew that he was a sinner—the wise ones whom he approached unanimously told him that Varuṇa disliked him on that account...Vasiṣṭha tried to explain away his sins...[in] a stanza (VII.86.6), which gives one of the finest expressions to a sinner's psychology.<sup>107</sup>

Vasiṣṭha says to Varuṇa, for instance:

I ask myself what that sin was, Varuṇa for I want to understand;  
I go to the wise to ask them.  
The poets tell me the very same thing:  
“This Varuṇa is angry with you.”

What was that terrible crime, Varuṇa,  
for which you would slay your friend who praises you?  
Tell me it, you who are hard to deceive and self-ruled.  
so that I may hurry to you with homage and be free of sin. (7.86.3-4)

Erikson has found that a sense of one's nature as sinful and corrupt is significant in the development of the religious man, for just as it is “only in ill health... [that one realizes] the intricacy of the body,”<sup>108</sup> so it is only in a state of conflict that human nature opens itself up to serious examination. In describing Luther as a man “with a precocious, sensitive, and intense conscience” who “subject[s] himself to a scrupulous and relentless form of self-criticism,”<sup>109</sup> Erikson points out a pattern oddly similar to what we find in Vasiṣṭha. Just as “Luther limit[s] our knowledge of God to our individual experience of temptation,”<sup>110</sup> so also when Vasiṣṭha gets particular about what went wrong in his relationship

with Varuṇa the list of sins can easily be described as perversions of the will: “wine, anger, dice, or carelessness” (7.86.6b). In fact Vasiṣṭha even says as much in a subsequent hymn:

If out of weakness of will,  
I have gone against the current, O pure one,  
Be gracious, good ruler, be gracious!  
(7.89.3)

Whether or not Vasiṣṭha’s experience of such moral demands on the inner workings of his conscience is due to a concern over culpability in Śakti’s murder,<sup>111</sup> to some other unknown personal laxity, or to some unique empathy with the sins of his culture, it is clear he suffers intensely from their effects upon his relationship with his god.

Given his moral sensitivity and its necessary ties to the old cult of Varuṇa, Vasiṣṭha’s conciliatory efforts with the new military cult of Indra must have cost him a dear price. Confronted with the obvious strength of the Indra cult, Vasiṣṭha must have, at some point, found himself faced with three options: to reject the new cult in regressive support of a paternally authoritarian god; to reject the Varuṇa cult in conformist support of the new religious pattern and with the subsequent denial of his own religious needs; or to work out some kind of conciliation which would both meet his own needs and not require him to withdraw from contemporary society. Conciliation of the two cults was the only adaptive response Vasiṣṭha could make. For spiritual reasons he could not deny Varuṇa; but a Varuṇa cult on its own and in the intensely personal style evident in Vasiṣṭha’s Varuṇa hymns would not have worked out in an India concerned less with the leisure activity of introspection and more with the workaday problems of secure borders and political and economic stability. Indeed, in times to come introspective religiosity *would* be in demand, but not for a few more centuries. For someone like Vasiṣṭha, whose pattern of success-oriented decisions should be clear, conciliation was the only progressive conclusion he could make to the dilemma. The price for conciliation was compounded, moreover, by the fact that Varuṇa could no longer provide him a continued context for self-indulgent introspection but had, for the culture’s sake, to be transformed from a god who could

ensure morality through individual intimidation—"May the anger of Varuṇa spare us." (7.84.2c)—to one who, in acquiring specialized functions within a large pantheon and in belonging to an increasingly complex ritual system, could ensure morality only within the network of the other gods and only by means of the concerted efforts of an increasing number of priests. As we know from the religious history of India (though Vasiṣṭha certainly could not have anticipated it), this would effectively undermine Varuṇa's religious potency.

We have, in this movement towards a grander vision of society to which Vasiṣṭha contributes, several commentarial reflections on Eriksonian themes. Moral dominance is evident here, but not because we encounter the types of resolutions made in this direction seen earlier in the victory and continuity themes, but because we find clearly reflected in the material the sense of moral dilemma Vasiṣṭha must have faced, though in different forms, in all his struggles: the personal anxiety of his relationship to Varuṇa, and the personal and cultural frustrations of the conjoining of the two cults. The successful experience of such inner labors would doubtless have given rise to a sense of moral superiority as these issues came to closure, and to a sense that because of his suffering he was not only righteous but truthful (*ṛtāvan*)<sup>112</sup> as well.

Fatherhood and sonship are reflected here also. In making the conciliatory resolution he did between the two gods Vasiṣṭha, in part, addressed Erikson's issue of generativity: concern for "establishing and guiding the next generation."<sup>113</sup> By focusing on new religious patterns, even if these somehow violated or compromised his earlier religiosity, Vasiṣṭha's interest was directed towards not only the most adaptive resolution for himself but also the best step forward for his time and for that of his children's generation. In describing "man's relationship to his production as well as to his progeny,"<sup>114</sup> the generative stage focuses on the creation, transformation and maintenance of institutions, as "all institutions codify the ethics of generative succession."<sup>115</sup> In the development of an Indrāvaruṇau cult, Vasiṣṭha provides not only a new theology for the world to come—whereby the two goals "promote the properly integrated socio-political life of the Vedic

Aryans’’<sup>116</sup>—but also a new view of an old god, a Varuṇa who now is “responsible for law and order...in the socio-ethical sense.”<sup>114</sup>

The “fathering” implicit in this adaptive concern for the culture of his time is bound to the “sonship” suggested in Vasiṣṭha’s ties to Varuṇa. We may only speculate as to how Vasiṣṭha, in the end, felt about this god. Although he never actually calls Varuṇa “father”—unlike Indra, who is often invoked by the Vasiṣṭha “as sons do the father”<sup>118</sup>—the reference to the “great father” (*pitā ... mahān*) in 7.52.3c may, according to Sāyaṇa, be to Varuṇa as father of Vasiṣṭha.<sup>119</sup> Nevertheless, we find in the Vasiṣṭhas’ Varuṇa collection (7.82-85), all the ambivalence appropriate to a father-son relationship: all the frustrations of a strong yet sensitive and obedient devotee responding to what he perceives as his god’s random authority. Moreover, in Erikson’s discussion of the father-son theme, particularly in reference to Gandhi, it becomes clear that one of the great achievements of the *homo religiosus* is, in his productive years, to take the accomplishments of his father and not only move beyond them but also apply them in creative ways for his fellow men: “To better the parent thus means to replace him...”<sup>120</sup> In his reworking of the prevailing religious patterns, then, Vasiṣṭha does just this: retaining his allegiance to the old god and the moral nature of his thought, yet reshaping it for a larger social context, and thereby bridging the gap between the old ways of his “father” and the quickly changing patterns of the rest of his culture.

As one of several leading religious personalities of his time, Vasiṣṭha would certainly have been instrumental in giving shape to the religious life of Vedic India. R̥gvedic hymns written by and about him and his family, however, are more than just accounts of the contributions he made to his era or, for that matter, more than just personal memoirs of his struggles. Materials attributed to him reveal instead a man so perceptively attuned to his surroundings that, because of special communicative gifts, he could match the inner workings of his mind with the outer movements of his social milieu. That his story, fragmented as the extant remains are, epitomizes (and advocates) Aryanism over barbarism, priestcraft over secularism, and moral probity over self-indulgence and thereby provides a symbolic narrative for the founding of Vedic

civilization is clear; that it so totally reflects the life experience of one man and his family is testimony to the power of truly religious men.

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<sup>1</sup> E.g., N. G. Chapekar, "The Rgvedic R̥ṣis: Viśvāmitra and Kuśika in Surendra Nath Sen, ed., *D.V. Potdar Commemorative Volume* (1950), pp. 59-62; Herman Lommel, "Vasiṣṭha und Viśvāmitra," *Oriens*, 18-19 (1965-66): 200-227; Arthur Anthony MacDonnell and Arthur Berriedale Keith, *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects*, 2 vols. (1st ed. 1912; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1967), 2:274-277, 310-312; John Muir, *Original Sanskrit Texts*, 2 vols. (London: Trübner & Co., 1868), 1:317-375; F. E. Pargiter, *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition* (1st ed. 1922; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1972), pp. 205-206; V. G. Rahurkar, "Viśvāmitra & the Viśvāmitras in the R̥gveda," *Oriental Thought* 5.1 (January 1961): 25-56; H. D. Velankar, "The Family-Hymns in the Family-Maṇḍalas," *Journal, Bombay Branch, Royal Asiatic Society*, 18 (1942): 1-22; H. D. Velankar, "A Family Hymn of the Agastyas," *XII All-India Oriental Conference*, (1943-44): 223-231.

<sup>2</sup> R. N. Dandekar, "The Dāśarājña," in R. N. Dandekar, ed., *CASS Studies* #1 (Poona: 1973): 127-129; Abinas Chandra Das, "A Chapter of Rigvedic History," *The Calcutta Review*, 9 (November 1923): 154-169; Alfred Hillebrandt, *Vedische Mythologie*, 2 vols. (2nd rev. ed.; Breslau: 1927), 1:519-523; MacDonnell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, 1:355-356; Pargiter, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-11, 236-7; Manilal Patel, "A Historical Hymn of the R̥gveda (RV. VII. 33)," *Journal of the Gujarat Research Society, Bombay*, 1 (October 1939): 143-148; C. Kunhan Raja, "Dāśarājña (Battle of the Ten Kings)," *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 37.4 (December 1961): 261-278; U. C. Sharma, "The Dāśarājña War," in Dandekar, ed., *CASS Studies*: 101-126.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., Sadashiva A. Dange, "The Birth of Vasistha," *The Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society*, LV. 3 & 4 (October 1964 and January 1965): 83-91; Pargiter, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-217.

<sup>4</sup> K. R. Potdar, "Contribution of the Vasiṣṭha family," *Oriental Thought*, 5.4 (December 1961): 2, 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 2, 5, 4.

<sup>6</sup> R. N. Dandekar, "Varuṇa, Vasiṣṭha and Bhakti" in J. Tilakasiri, ed., *Añjali: O.H. de A. Wijesekera Felicitation Volume* (Peradeniya: The Felicitation Volume Editorial Committee, University of Ceylon, 1970), p. 77.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*; R. N. Dandekar, "Vasiṣṭha as Religious Conciliator," in *K.R. Cama Oriental Institute Golden Jubilee Volume* (Bombay: 1969), 237-248.

<sup>8</sup> See Roger A. Johnson, "Introduction," in Roger A. Johnson, ed., *Psychohistory and Religion: The Case of Young Man Luther* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), esp. p. 3 for a brief discussion of developments in the field.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1 ff. and Donald Capps, "Psychohistory and Historical Genres: The Plight and Promise of Eriksonian Biography," in Peter Homans, ed., *Childhood and*

*Selfhood: Essays on Tradition, Religion, and Modernity in the Psychology of Erik H. Erikson* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1978), pp. 189 ff.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 210.

<sup>11</sup> Roger A. Johnson, "Psychohistory as Religious Narrative: The Demoniac Role of Hans Luther in Erikson's Saga of Human Evolution," in Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

<sup>12</sup> Sudhir Kakar, "The Logic of Psychohistory," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 1.1. (Autumn 1970): 193.

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, the discussion in Johnson, "Introduction," pp. 1-5.

<sup>14</sup> See the bibliography compiled to 1974 in *History of Childhood Quarterly, Journal of Psychohistory*, 2.4 (Spring 1975): 517-562.

<sup>15</sup> Capps, *op. cit.*, pp. 210-211.

<sup>16</sup> Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (1st ed. 1950; New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1963), pp. 247-274.

<sup>17</sup> Peter Homans, "The Significance of Erikson's Psychology for Modern Understandings of Religion," in Homans, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

<sup>18</sup> Kakar, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-190.

<sup>19</sup> Don Browning, "Erikson and the Search for a Normative Image of Man," in Homans, *op. cit.*, pp. 264-292.

<sup>20</sup> Paul W. Pruyser, "From Freud to Erikson: Developments in Psychology of Religion," in Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

<sup>21</sup> See Peter Homans, "Introduction," in Homans, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

<sup>22</sup> Waud H. Kracke, "A Psychoanalyst in the Field: Erikson's Contributions to Anthropology," in Homans, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

<sup>23</sup> Erik H. Erikson, *Young Man Luther: A Study in Psychoanalysis and History*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. 1958), p. 22.

<sup>24</sup> William Meissner, "Faith and Identity," in Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 108-109.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 97, 107.

<sup>26</sup> Kracke, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

<sup>27</sup> Erik H. Erikson, *Gandhi's Truth: On the Origins of Militant Nonviolence*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1969), p. 401.

<sup>28</sup> See Fred Weinstein and Gerald M. Platt, "The Coming Crisis in Psychohistory," *The Journal of Modern History* 47.2 (June 1975): 226.

<sup>29</sup> Erikson, *Young Man Luther*, p. 54. This passage is quoted in Meissner, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-107 with the interesting change from "an official identity" to "an artificial identity."

<sup>30</sup> See Capps, *op. cit.*, pp. 218-220.

<sup>31</sup> Johnson, "Psychohistory as Religious Narrative," p. 161.

<sup>32</sup> Edward Washburn Hopkins, "Problematic Passages in the Rig-Veda," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 15 (1893): 252-283. Lommel thinks, however, that this skepticism of his teacher is "unfruchtbar" and "zu nichts führt," *op. cit.*, pp. 208, 223.

<sup>33</sup> Bṛhaddevatā 4.117-118. See also Karl Friedrich Geldner, trans., *Der Rig-Veda*, 4. vols. (HOS, vols. 33-36; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951-7), 1:395n; 2:273.

<sup>34</sup> Lommel, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

<sup>35</sup> Lommel, *op. cit.*, pp. 206-207. See also Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, trans., *The Rig Veda: An Anthology*, (New York: Penguin Books 1981), pp. 292-296, for notes on the sorcery in this hymn, and Potdar, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>36</sup> Note, for instance, the sympathetic principle behind the magical images in the Viśvāmitra verse 3.53.22, in contrast to the Vasiṣṭhide use of a sacrificial animal

(*paśú*; 3.53.23b), and the Vasiṣṭhide charge of the misuse of Soma, a god who will certainly use his power against the sacrificially ignorant (7.104.12d, 13a). Vasiṣṭha's enemy is called, moreover, a Brahman-hater (*brahmadūṣ*; 7.104.2c), and the Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa (12.6.1.41) has a tradition that the Vasiṣṭhas "were once the only priests to act as Brahmins, but that later any priest could serve as such." Das, *op. cit.*, p. 160. See also Lommel's discussion of Viśvāmitra's power over the demons, *op. cit.*, p. 213, and Rahurkar's discussion of the special efficacy and magical power of the Viśvāmitra *māntra*, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

<sup>37</sup> Lommel, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211. It is not clear how important Viśvāmitra's Kṣatriya background was in this ouster and if the ouster reflects Brahman-Kṣatriya contention at all, Chapekar, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-62. On Viśvāmitra and the sociology of his family see Rahurkar, *op. cit.* Rahurkar quotes Hutton and Ghurye in support of the possibility that the hostility between these two families reflects inter-caste (and possibly inter-cultural) rivalries, *op. cit.*, pp. 34, 36. On this see also Sharma, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-108, which suggests that caste is less an issue than ritual skill or political allegiance.

<sup>39</sup> Lommel, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 212.

<sup>41</sup> Note, for instance, the strong theme of sin and guilt found in the so-called "bhakti" cycle, 7.86-89. Dandekar, "Varuṇa, Vasiṣṭha, and Bhakti," *op. cit.*, pp. 78-79; A. P. Karmarkar, "Vasiṣṭha's Remorse Over the Death of his Son," *Animals, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, 22 (1941): 120-122.

<sup>42</sup> Lommel, *op. cit.*, pp. 213, 221. Lommel relies here on the Bṛhaddevatā tradition which says that a demon took the form of Vasiṣṭha and was thus responsible for the burning.

<sup>43</sup> See John Brough, *The Early Brahmanical System of Gotra and Pravara* (Cambridge: University Press, 1953), pp. 172-187, and Pargiter, *op. cit.*, pp. 203-217.

<sup>44</sup> 7.33.3c, 5b; 7.83.8a. See Sharma, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-124 for a discussion of the secondary literature on this battle.

<sup>45</sup> 7.20.2c; 7.25.3a; 7.32.10a; 7.33.3c; 7.64.3c; 7.83.1d ff. Dandekar believes that Sudās, leader of the large tribe called the Bharatas (= the second wave of Aryan immigrants into India) was a very ambitious man who wanted to bring both Aryan and non-Aryan settlements under his control by diplomacy and military strategy. "The Dāśarājña," pp. 127-128.

<sup>46</sup> Herman Oldenberg, "Ueber die Liedverfasser des R̥gveda," rpt. in H. Oldenberg, *Kleine Schriften*, 1 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1967), pp. 573-578. This Confederation consisted of the five states of the early Aryan settlers (*pāñcājānāḥ*) and some neighboring non-Aryan principalities, but the number ten has to be understood as "only generally descriptive rather than definitive," Dandekar, "The Dāśarājña," p. 128. Sharma believes that there were actually many more than ten, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

<sup>47</sup> There is some question whether the singular "Vasiṣṭha" refers to one ancestral figure or simply to "a Vasiṣṭha." On the issue of the use of singulars and plurals in names see Oldenberg "Ueber die Liedverfasser des R̥gveda," pp. 570-571. Dandekar has suggested that the alliance between Sudās and Vasiṣṭha may reflect, among other things, Sudās' desire to bring the fairly powerful state of the Tṛtsus to his side so that Bharata sovereignty in Aryandom would be that much more secure. "The Dāśarājña," p. 128.

<sup>48</sup> 3.33, 53 (3.53.21-24 being the famous *vasiṣṭhadveṣṇyah* verses). See Chapekar, *op. cit.*, p. 60; Rahurkar, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28.

<sup>49</sup> See 7.83.8. As Dandekar points out, there is “no evidence to suggest that...[the contest between the two groups] extended over several generations.” “The Dāśarājña,” p. 129.

<sup>50</sup> That is, the songs are often the fruit of poetic competitions between priests.

<sup>51</sup> As Geldner, points out, the battle is likened to a sacrifice, both by image and in terminology. Geldner, *op. cit.*, 2:195n.

<sup>52</sup> Note the pun here: *mātsya* is the common word for “fish.”

<sup>53</sup> That is, Indra helped Sudās—the opponents being Sudās and Bheda. See RV.7.83.4. Presumably, Bheda was the leader of the Ten Kings Confederation. Dandekar, “The Dāśarājña,” p. 129.

<sup>54</sup> E.g., Tṛtsu enemies. See Sharma, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-116 for a good discussion of these and the other peoples prominent in the war.

<sup>55</sup> See Geldner, *op. cit.*, 2:196n.

<sup>56</sup> That is, from benefit to themselves.

<sup>57</sup> Presumably, Viśvāmitra.

<sup>58</sup> See Geldner, *op. cit.*, 2:196n.

<sup>59</sup> Note that despite the intense animosity, the participants still abide by the civilized rules of warfare. It seems clear that with this victory Sudās succeeded in establishing the sovereignty of the Bharatas in the region of the *saptā sindhu*, the main area of Aryan occupation at the time, and Dandekar has said “I believe that the source of the name Bhāratavarṣa by which India came to be known is to be sought in this great historical event,” “The Dāśarājña,” p. 129.

<sup>60</sup> Important for the effectiveness of the ritual is the generational continuity of the pious—here we have a kind of procession of pilgrims to Indra.

<sup>61</sup> See also 7.23.6; 7.37.4; 7.88.1.

<sup>62</sup> This verse contains a short geneology, one of the first in the Rgveda: Parāśara, his grandson; Śatayātu, his son; and of course Vasiṣṭha. Pargiter, *op. cit.*, pp. 192, 209.

<sup>63</sup> Sharma, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

<sup>64</sup> Developmental themes which recur continually throughout the great man’s life, often at times of trauma or the resurgence of traumatic stress, and which provide focal points for the maturation process. Erikson, *Gandhi’s Truth*, pp. 98, 128.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 109, 117-118.

<sup>67</sup> See also 7.83.1, 6-7.

<sup>68</sup> Erikson, *Gandhi’s Truth*, p. 129.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 132, 133.

<sup>70</sup> Even if we were to accept the suggestion of Dandekar (*op. cit.*, p. 128) and others that Sudās’ alliance with Vasiṣṭha and his Tṛtsus was made for political rather than ritual reasons, the argument for Vasiṣṭha’s special selection would still hold.

<sup>71</sup> In fact, late literature casts the Vasiṣṭhas as the very best examples of *purohitas*. A. B. Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, 2 vols. (HOS, vols. 31-32; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1925), 1:293.

<sup>72</sup> Keith, *Religion*, 1:131, 228; A. A. MacDonnell, *Vedic Mythology* (rpt. Varanasi, Delhi: Indological Book House, 1971), pp. 96, 147; Oldenberg, “Ueber die Liedverfasser des Rigveda,” pp. 574-575.

<sup>73</sup> 7.83.1.

<sup>74</sup> *Vedic Index*, 2:249 ff; J. C. Heesterman, “Brahmin, Ritual and Renouncer,” *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd-und Ostasiens*, 8 (1964): 1-31.

<sup>75</sup> This type of birth falls into the category of an *āyonija* birth, not born from the mother's womb. See Dange, *op. cit.*, pp. 84, 89.

<sup>76</sup> Like some of the other family hymns, (3.53; 5.40; 6.47), it occurs at the end of the Indra section. Velankar, "Family Hymns," pp. 1-2.

<sup>77</sup> 7.83.8: "You offered aid to Sudās, surrounded on all sides in the Ten Kings Battle, Indra and Varuṇa, when the white-clad Ṛtsus with their hair braid bent in homage, piously revered you with prayer."

<sup>78</sup> "Indra wanders far away at a Soma-sacrifice, performed by Pāśadyumna. There appear the Vasiṣṭhas, with the purpose of taking him...to the succour of Sudās. Indra at once declares his readiness to rush with the Vasiṣṭhas to help Sudās." Patel, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

<sup>79</sup> In making his way together with the Vasiṣṭhas, Indra seems to have passed other Soma offerings taking place at the same time.

<sup>80</sup> A "group of stanzas to be sung in battles. Sāyaṇa (on TBr. II, 4, 3, 1) would refer to X.133, which begins with the Śakvarī-metre and which is ascribed to Sudās." Patel, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

<sup>81</sup> See *Ibid.*, p. 146 on the symbolism of the various threes.

<sup>82</sup> This secret is the great tree of humanity, later interpreted by Sāyaṇa as *samsāra*. While Patel, *op. cit.*, p. 146, interprets c by saying "the succession of generations is there referred to in another picture of a cloth to be woven," it seems more likely to refer, as this image usually does, to ritual activity. Cf., 12c; and 1.110.1a; 10.130.1ad.

<sup>83</sup> The Ṛtsus, i.e., the family of Sudās. "The stanza contains Agastya's words with which he brings up Vasiṣṭha to manhood." Patel, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

<sup>84</sup> The conjunction of light themes with a discussion of this battle can also be found in 7.83.2 ff.

<sup>85</sup> MacDonnell and Keith suggest that this last verse represents the adoption of Vasiṣṭha into the Ṛtsu tribe—an act necessitated by his divine birth which, although it placed him in special relationship to the gods, deprived him of a very necessary "social location." *Vedic Index*, 2:277.

<sup>86</sup> Erikson, *Gandhi's Truth*, p. 194.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 320-321.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132; see also p. 125.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 253.

<sup>92</sup> And in verses like RV.10.15.8 and 10.66.14 we find reminders that this aid has been continuous only because the Vasiṣṭhas have continued the eloquent traditions of their forefathers.

<sup>93</sup> See Velankar, "Family-Hymns" and "A Family Hymn of the Agastyas."

<sup>94</sup> Although the "election" of the Vasiṣṭhas by the Vedic gods is a certainty with them, other families are acknowledged by the Vasiṣṭhas to participate in a personal relationship with these gods as well. See for example, 10.150.5.

<sup>95</sup> See 7.12.3; 7.39.7; 7.86.5; 7.88.1, 4.

<sup>96</sup> Dange, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91.

<sup>98</sup> E.g., 7.23.1; 7.73.3; 7.80.1; 7.88.4; 7.90.7; 7.95.6.

<sup>99</sup> E.g., 7.23.6; 7.9.6; 7.26.5; 7.42.6; 7.95.6; 7.7.7; 7.12.3; 7.76.7; 7.77.6; 7.90.7; 7.39.7; and 10.65.15; 10.122.8; 10.150.5.

<sup>100</sup> 1.17; 3.62.1-3; 4.41; 4.42.7-10; 6.68; 7.82-85; 8.59.

<sup>101</sup> Dandekar, "Vasiṣṭha as Religious Conciliator," p. 240.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 244.

<sup>105</sup> The emphasis on the single individual in this cult is reflected in the later brahminical ritual system in an interiorization of the ritual and an increasing self-sufficiency of the ritual patron, Heesterman, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-22.

<sup>106</sup> Dandekar, "Varuṇa, Vasiṣṭha, and *Bhakti*," p. 78. See also Hillebrandt, *op. cit.*, 2:33.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>108</sup> Erikson, *Young Man Luther*, p. 14.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 253.

<sup>111</sup> Karmarkar, *op. cit.*; Lommel, *op. cit.*

<sup>112</sup> E.g., 7.61.2a; 7.87.3c.

<sup>113</sup> Erikson, *Childhood and Society*, p. 267.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 268.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 267.

<sup>116</sup> Dandekar, "Vasiṣṭha as Religious Conciliator," p. 246.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.

<sup>118</sup> E.g., 7.26.2c; 7.29.4d; 7.32.3b, 26b.

<sup>119</sup> Geldner, *op. cit.*, 2:228n; Karmarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

<sup>120</sup> Erikson, *Gandhi's Truth*, p. 129.

## GNOSTICISM—A STUDY IN LIMINAL SYMBOLISM

INGVILD SÆLID GILHUS

Victor W. Turner's article, "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in *Rites de Passage*", is well known.<sup>1</sup> The article is primarily an analysis of symbols. Turner presents a brilliant model for the symbolic structure of a period in ritual which has hitherto been considered to be insignificant and rather confused. He lays stress on the inner meaning of the rituals, and knits together ritual, myth and society into a cohesive structure. This type of theory, which opens perspectives on the structure of symbols in different areas of culture, is basically useful in the study of the history of religions. Because of difficulties in finding an acceptable external point of reference within this field,<sup>2</sup> it is natural to concentrate upon the internal logic of a given religious system: not, in the structuralistic way, to determine the external relationships between the various factors, i.e. their "grammatical" structure, but to discern the internal meaning of the different factors and their combined system of meanings. The result could then be correlated with sociological, psychological or historical perspectives.<sup>3</sup>

In religion, the consciousness of the believer is expressed through myths, and the original experience is locked therein.<sup>4</sup> The problem for the researcher is to reconstruct their meaning and examine their intention. This may be done by means of a theoretical model which fits their symbolic structure and makes it intelligible. Turner's theory about the liminal period in the rites of passage offers that sort of model. It interprets the religious facts and correlates them with social realities.<sup>5</sup> The theory has been fruitful in ritual-analysis. In this article, his observations concerning the liminal phase will primarily be applied to an analysis of myths.

### I

In general, all rites of passage are characterized by three phases: separation, *limen* (or margin) and aggregation.<sup>6</sup> According to Turner:

The first phase of separation comprises symbolic behaviour signifying the detachment from the individual or group either from an earlier fixed point in the social structure or a set of cultural conditions (a “state”); during the intervening liminal period, the state of the ritual subject (the “passenger”) is ambiguous; he passes through a realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state; in the third phase the passage is consummated.<sup>7</sup>

Turner characterizes the liminal phase as having a lack of structure and as the initiand being “betwixt and between”. It is the peculiar character of this phase which makes the transition and transformation possible. Liminality is basically characterized by being without structure, but is the source and seedbed of positive structural assertions. The lack of structure is combined with a richness of symbols. The symbolism is often modelled on human biological processes, seen as equivalent to structural and cultural processes and to processes which take place within man. Aspects of human physiology are used as models for social, cosmic and religious ideas, and the human body is a symbol of different levels of existence. The “passenger” is viewed as structurally “invisible”—he is “at once no longer classified and not yet classified”.<sup>8</sup> This paradoxical situation is often expressed by symbolism connected with death and decomposition on the one hand, and with embryos and birth on the other. The sex distinctions are blurred, and the liminal persons are treated as neither male nor female or as androgynous. The cultural and social bonds no longer exist. The same symbolism is used to connect antithetical processes, for example, symbols related to both birth and death.

The liminal persons are often secluded from the structured society. They have nothing, “no status, property, insignia, secular clothing, rank, kinship position, nothing to demarcate them structurally from their fellows”.<sup>9</sup> The social structure of the liminal phase is very simple: the instructors have complete authority over the neophytes, who are totally submissive to the instructors, and there is complete equality among the neophytes (*communitas*).

The liminal period is the period when what Turner calls *gnosis* is achieved. Although the change of being takes place in the liminal phase, it is not activated until after the aggregation into the higher state. *Gnosis* is communicated through myths, exhibitions of sacred articles and through actions. Instructions contain the main outlines of cosmogony, theogony and anthropogony, and frequently the

secret names of the deities and spirits. Turner observes that the *sacra* communicated are characterized by disproportion, monstrosity and mystery. According to him, these characteristics are meant to force the neophytes into making cultural abstractions and into reflecting over the elements of their society and culture, and over the powers that generate and sustain these elements. The factors and building blocks of existence are in this way torn apart and made the subject of thought. It is the phenomena and processes of the liminal period "that paradoxically expose the basic building blocks of culture just when we pass out of and before we re-enter the structural realm".<sup>10</sup>

According to Turner, liminality and its social correlate *communitas* do not only appear in primitive religions, but may arise in different forms in complex societies as well.<sup>11</sup> Liminality may be institutionalized in societies with a high degree of specialization and complexity and develop a dialectic relationship with the surrounding structured society.<sup>12</sup> As one of his examples of permanent liminality, he mentions the monastic and mendicant orders in the world religions.<sup>13</sup> Our thesis is that *gnostic religion* furnishes a parallel to that type of permanent liminality.

Gnostic religion flourished during the 2nd, 3rd and 4th century A.D. as one of the major and more puzzling religious movements in the world. This article will examine some of its characteristic traits as viewed according to the pattern of the rites of passage. The meaning and function of gnostic religion are in different ways related to the meaning and function inherent in this pattern, and especially to the liminal period of the rites, as will be demonstrated below. The central concern of gnostic religion as it is presented both in the Nag Hammadi Library and by the church-fathers, is the fallen soul of man which must be restored to its original dwelling-place, that is, the *pneumatic* (spiritual) world above. Its cosmology describes the structure of the world above and below through which the soul once descended, and its soteriology deals with the final ascent of the soul through the cosmic spheres. The gnostic rituals are the sacraments of baptism, anointing, eucharist, chrism and bridal-chamber, which separate the believer from the world, ensure him a safe passage through the different stations on the journey, and finally transform his soul into a state of salvation.

The gnostic cosmos through which the soul passes is tripartite: The world above which is the source of *pneumatic* being, the world below which is material, and between these worlds, the intermediate realm of the *archons*, the rulers of the seven spheres of the planets.<sup>14</sup> The world above is the home of *pneuma* (the spiritual soul) from which it once descended and sank into the material world below, from which it must begin its ascent. At both the descent and the ascent of the soul, it must pass through the archontic realm of the middle stage. According to our thesis, this tripartite cosmological topology may be seen as a structural equivalent to the tripartite pattern of the rites of passage.

On the ritual level matters are more complicated, since the gnostics often had a negative attitude towards rituals and regarded them as belonging to the material world and not corresponding to the spiritual reality. The phases of separation and aggregation may therefore be elusive, but the liminal period is always present and is characteristic for gnosticism.

A tendency to replace the act by the word and to make it into a process in the soul of man is found throughout gnosticism and is in accordance with its spiritual goal, that is, the attainment of knowledge.<sup>15,16</sup> This cognition may in itself be perceived as spiritual sacrifices, as baptisms or as anointings.<sup>17</sup> Likewise, some texts contain descriptions of rituals which seem to be spiritual exercises on the symbolic level.<sup>18</sup> The spiritualization of ritual proceedings is in full accordance with the spiritual character of gnostic religion, which makes spirit and matter into polar opposites and rejects the latter as a fallen state of being. However, when the gnostics actually performed rituals, the rituals seem in the main to have been grouped around entrance into the community at the initiation and exit out of the community at death. Gnostic religion separated man from his state in the mortal world and prepared him for his aggregation into the world above. Baptism and anointing marked the point of separation from the state of being in the world, while the chrism and the bridal-chamber were sacraments of death and marked the aggregation to the state of final salvation.<sup>19</sup> Between these two points lies the period of transformation and danger directly reflected in gnostic mythology. This three-stage ritual pattern corresponds to the cosmological pattern outlined above.

Gnostic mythology is mainly concerned with the liminal area of the cosmos and its powers and rulers. The primary function of the gnostic myths is to invoke and sustain a process of change and transformation in the listeners, a process which occurs on the psychological level. The divergences and elaborations are reflections of meditation and thought, and express the process of transformation. The "initiand" is set apart from his society and culture, and his transformation is fulfilled on the cosmological level when the soul transcends the spheres after death. Thus, gnostic mythology is a liminal phenomenon, because of its transformative function.<sup>20</sup> It is a mythology of passage.

## II

Characteristic for liminal persons is that they are interstructural: "They are at once no longer classified and not yet classified".<sup>21</sup> This two-fold character is evident through two forms of symbolism: that which in different ways is drawn from the spheres of death and dissolution, and that connected with gestation and parturition. In gnosticism, the symbolism of death and dissolution is expressed as the neophyte being dead and alive and yet not dead and not alive, all at the same time. The material body is symbolically conceived of as the tomb of the soul. Because he is locked inside a mortal body, man is living in the tomb and death becomes a chief symbol of being in the world.<sup>22</sup> "He who is born of the Mother is brought forth into death and the cosmos: he who is reborn of Christ is transported into life and the Eight".<sup>23,24</sup> The symbolism of gestation and parturition is expressed in an extensive and special use of embryological symbols. According to this, man is described as an abortion because he has not received the fertilizing *pneuma* symbolically associated with *sperma*.<sup>25</sup> However, the abortive state also includes an aspect of potentiality. When he is fertilized, he will become a living child and a product of the male.

The liminal period in general is the period when *gnosis* is communicated. Different systems of symbols may be used to express this *gnosis*. Physiological systems of symbols and systems of symbols based upon analogy with the human body are common,<sup>26</sup> because the human body with its processes is one of the most apt mediums

for contemplating and mediating complex structures of cosmology, theology, psychology and sociology—and of knitting together those different areas and relating them to each other. The human biological processes are then conceived to be “isomorphic” with cultural and structural processes on different levels.<sup>27</sup> In gnosticism, the embryological and mortological symbolism are parts of a wider context of physiological and biological symbolism. The body is the material vehicle for the spiritual element and is viewed as antagonistic to that element. Thus, the physiological processes of the body serve to intoxicate the spirit and make it numb. Bodily symbolism therefore often has negative connotations. Generally speaking, the body represents a complex system of structures. The orifices of the body and their discharges are the marginal points of the system. It is—like every structured system—vulnerable at its margins, and those marginal areas are seen as especially dangerous.<sup>28</sup> Gnostic religion implements bodily symbolism of a special kind. It uses symbolism which connects a negative evaluation of the female physiological processes to a negative evaluation of theology, cosmology, society and material existence. This symbolism concentrates on the female reproductive organs and their discharges. The discharges, because of their marginal character in relation to the human body, provide a set of symbols which are well adapted to liminality.<sup>29</sup>

The metaphor of birth is universally applied to describe creation. In gnosticism this metaphor also receives negative connotations because of the negative comprehension of reproduction: Each child-birth will lead to a diffusion of the spiritual element, which in this way is divided into smaller and smaller elements. The physiological act of birth is therefore a negative event. The beginning of the creation of the world below is symbolically described in terms of birth. Not as a normal birth, but as a pathological event, not the result of intercourse but the result of a sort of virgin-conception leading to an abortion. The liminal character of creation is expressed by this unusual form of conception and by the birth-product, a miscarriage. In contrast to a normal birth, which has only a passing liminal character, the abortion is permanently ambiguous.

According to a well-known myth, Sophia conceives a child without her marriage-partner, and that child is described as an

abortion. This child is either the lower Sophia, or the demiurge Ialdabaoth, or as told in *Orig. World*, Envy.<sup>30</sup> In all cases the product of the birth is the ruling will of the lower world. The material substance from which this world is derived is likened to an afterbirth which is cast aside at the birth: "Just as all the useless afterbirth of one who bears a little child falls, likewise the matter which came into being from the shadow was cast aside".<sup>31</sup>

In Sethian speculations our world has the shape of a womb, and the creativity of the lower world takes place in this "unclean and hurtful womb of disorder".<sup>32</sup> This womb is identified with Nature, and is divided into four parts which are called "Hymen, Afterbirth, Power and Water".<sup>33</sup> The comprehension of cosmos is founded upon the symbols of the hurtful womb, its creativity and its discharges, and mediated through gynecological descriptions: And Nature "turned her dark vagina and cast from her the power of fire which was in her from the beginning through the practices of the Darkness".<sup>34</sup> "And her unclean femininity was strong. And the wrathful womb came up and made the mind dry, resembling a fish which has a drop of fire and a power of fire".<sup>35</sup>

Behind these speculations lies medical knowledge which, as Paula Fredriksen has pointed out, is hidden in the gnostic pun on *hysterēma* "deficiency" and *hystera* "womb". She has demonstrated how the female disease of hysterical suffocation, which according to the Hellenistic medical science was caused by the dry and wandering womb, is used in the Sophia-symbolism and is the cause of her deficiency.<sup>36</sup> Existing embryological theory was also applied. According to this doctrine, it is the male who contributes form to the child and the female who contributes matter.<sup>37</sup> Sophia's creation is a female procreation, and therefore without form and structure—and the Valentinians called it "a false and female fruit".<sup>38</sup>

The Valentinians developed these speculations in a spiritual direction. The female discharges have turned into emotions which are emitted from the higher and the lower Sophia: grief, fear, bewilderment, ignorance and conversion. The different elements of the world below, material as well as psychical, are derived from these emotions.<sup>39</sup> The material symbolism of gynecology is left behind and partly changed by a symbolism based upon female psychology.

The material medium for the gynecological symbolism—or in Turner's words "the sensory pole" of the symbol—is the female organs of reproduction and their discharges or products.<sup>40</sup> A deeper study of symbols, however, will disclose several meanings connected with different levels of existence. According to Turner, a dominant symbol polarizes meaning. In addition to the sensory pole where the meaning content is closely related to its outward form, and which is "gross" both with regard to its lack of details and physiological content, there is also an ideological pole with which the structure and the values of morality and society are connected.<sup>41</sup> The function of symbols is not only to summarize experience, but more important in a liminal period, to be the source of new experience for the individual. Human experience and thinking are governed by the stimulating effect of those expressive symbols, and they are ruling forces in mythological development. As for the unclean womb of creation and its products, this is founded on a sensory experience. According to the Hippolytian account of Sethian thinking, "Heaven and earth are shaped like a womb having a navel in the middle. And, he says, if anyone wishes to visualize this shape, let him carefully examine a pregnant womb belonging to any animal he wishes, and he will find the design of heaven and earth and everything in between exactly laid out".<sup>42</sup> The gnostics connect the womb with the liminal birth products of miscarriage and afterbirth. On the sensory level, the symbols reflect the comprehension of central physiological processes, those of procreation and parturition. The symbolic meanings developed from this symbolism connect matter and therefore all material products with the birth products, and especially with the afterbirth. The human body, which is ultimately the product of the primary birth, is viewed negatively and designated "the prison of the body", "the body of darkness", or briefly "the beast".<sup>43</sup> And in the words of *The Treatise on Resurrection*: "The afterbirth of the body is old age, and you exist in corruption".<sup>44</sup>

On the theological level, the god of this world, the demiurge Ialdabaoth, is symbolized as the result of an incomplete conception, born as a miscarriage in darkness and ignorance.

On the cosmological level, the world is conceptualized through the gynecological symbols as the dark and unclean womb of disorder continually bringing forth its material products.

On the psychological level, a similar symbolism is applied, as is demonstrated by *The Exegesis on the Soul*. This treatise is an exposition of the different modalities of the soul. It plays upon the images of the soul as a whore and as a virgin, known from the mythology of Sophia.

The soul abandons her virgin-state with her Father, prostitutes herself, and falls into the hands of many robbers. But she repents and cries out to her Father. Because of her repentance she will in due time be restored to her virgin-state, and with gynecological symbols: "Indeed she (the soul) is female in her nature as well. She even has her womb".<sup>45</sup> The womb, however, is placed on the outside of the soul like the male genitalia. But when she repents, the Father will have mercy upon her, and her womb will be turned from its external domain inward and it will be baptized and cleansed of all its pollution.<sup>46,47</sup>

The symbols of the unclean womb and the pathological products of birth connect the different levels of experience and store information about several levels simultaneously. These symbols lend what they symbolize a special flavour, that of ambiguity and lack of structure which ultimately is grounded in the corresponding sensory experience. It is a gnostic insight and paradox that the rigorous cosmological, social and anthropological structures of this world have their origin in ambiguity and disorder, comprehended with the help of gynecological symbols.

The history of religions has always had a bias in favour of universal structures and symbols and in favour of the laws by which these are governed. If it were possible to find universal meanings in religious symbols, they would probably lie at the sensory level of the symbol, or at its material foundation. The more the meanings move towards the ideological pole, the more it is necessary to take into consideration the whole system of symbols. The development of gynecological symbols must be viewed in relation to the system of symbols, and especially in view of the dualistic character of gnostic religion, in relation to their polar opposites within the total set of symbols. The ideological opposite of the symbolism of the female procreation is found in gnosticism in the symbols evolved around the *pneuma* or the spiritual elements of the world above. At their sensory pole they have a physiological foundation in semen. The

spermatic symbolism varies between being comprehended spiritually and being confused with its sensory pole. The spiritual elements are then identified with the male semen.<sup>48</sup> The contrast between female conception without seed and spermatic conception is one of the major symbolic lines of orientation in gnostic religion. It represents the liminal, ambiguous and transformative in contrast to the structured, unambiguous and accomplished. The liminal period is marked by an ample use of female symbols, while the state of salvation to come is marked by symbols of masculinity. As put by the Valentinians: “As long as we were children of the female only, as of a dishonourable union, we were incomplete, childish, without understanding, weak and without form, brought forth like abortions, in short, we were children of the woman. But having been given form by the Saviour, we are the children of the man and the bride-chamber”,<sup>49,50</sup> or as nicely summed up in *Zostrianos*: “Flee from the madness and bondage of femininity and choose for yourselves the salvation of masculinity”.<sup>51</sup>

### III

Bodily symbolism is used to describe cosmology, psychology and theology. There is another structured system which uses the body as its symbol, and that is the social structure. Sociological analyses of gnostic religion have concentrated on the structure of the archontic world with the chief-*archon* at the top. It has been regarded as a direct reflection of the social structure against which the gnostics were opposed. According to this simple social model, the demiurge and his *archons* are seen either as an image of the system of secular powers, i.e. of the *Imperium Romanum*,<sup>52</sup> or as an image of the ecclesiastical powers, i.e. of the hierarchical order of the Catholic Church.<sup>53</sup>

Mary Douglas refers to the body as a correlation factor in sociological analysis. According to Douglas' hypothesis, the different images of the body are used to reflect and enforce the experience of the social system.<sup>54</sup> There is an agreement between social and bodily control systems, and this agreement may also be extended to the level of ideology. The control of the body is a reflection of the control of the society, and is also applicable to other areas

of the culture. This hypothesis opens an interesting perspective for the study of gnostic religion, especially in relation to liminal symbolism, aspects of which will be suggested below. The gnostic comprehension of the human body is twofold. First, the body is connected with the hierarchical order of the *archons*, and is a strict and rigorous structure. Second, the body is conceived of as a dark and sluggish vehicle for the pure spirit. According to the first view, the different *archons* furnish man with the different components of his soul and his body. This is Rabbinical knowledge rooted in astrology.<sup>55</sup> Each *archon* is connected with a planet, and together they make up "the hebdomad of the week".<sup>56</sup> The whole multitude of the heavenly powers correspond to the solar year and number 365.<sup>57</sup> "Then consequently ... man also has 365 bodily parts, so that to each individual power one part is allotted".<sup>58</sup> This is man made in the image of God as told in the Genesis. All his psychic and material components are furnished by the powers, beginning with his head and working downwards: "The first one began to create the head: Eteraphaope-Abron created his head; Meniggesstroeth created the brain; Asterechme the right eye; Thaspomocha the left eye; Yeronumos the right ear; Bissoum the left ear; Akioreim the nose; Banen-Ephroum the lips; Amen the teeth, etc.".<sup>59</sup> Special powers were set over the different senses. Demons preside over the passions and the emotions.<sup>60</sup> At last man is locked into the mortal body.<sup>61</sup> Except for his spiritual seed within, man is, in both body and soul, a product of the *archons*' creativity. He is also, as a structured system, in complete correspondence with the heavenly hierarchy of the *archons*, and according to astrological knowledge, in this way sympathetically connected to them.<sup>62</sup> As the crown of their work, the chief-*archon* implanted in Adam the desire for sexuality, corresponding to the Biblical command: "Be fruitful and multiply".<sup>63</sup>

The body is thus conceived of as a rigorous system with a clear structure. The different parts of the human body and soul are connected with the planetary powers, and there is little room for individual freedom. According to Douglas' hypothesis, this type of bodily comprehension would correspond to a social system which in the same manner lays great weight on the preservation of a clear and well-defined structure, a system with minutely defined rules for

the behaviour of the individual. Gnostic religion received a strong impetus from the Old Testament and especially from Genesis. This impetus could hardly have existed without some sort of dependence on Jewish religion and the Jewish social world. The story of the creation of man used by the gnostics is strongly rooted in the anthropogony of Genesis. Its elaborations and details are taken from Rabbinical speculations. The demuirge and his *archons* are a clear caricature of the God of Genesis, the Lord of Hosts. Man is bound to this God and his multitude of demonic servants as a puppet on a string. With 365 threads he is linked to God and his hosts of *archons* and powers. In the Jewish religion the connecting link between God and man was the written and the oral Law. This was the ruling force of the Jewish society, making the Jew a member of that society. The Jewish legal system with its prescriptions and rules set strict internal limits for its members and well-defined external boundaries. In gnosticism, this social model received its mythological counterpart in a conception of the human body divided into 365 different and defined parts, with each part ruled by a heavenly power turned demonic.

The gnostics aimed at freedom from the power of the *archons* who had made the body, and at freedom from the Law: "Therefore those who know these things have been set free from the rulers who made the world ... Thus if anyone confess the crucified, he is still a slave, and under the power of those who made the bodies; he who denies (him) has been set free from them, and knows the (saving) dispensation made by the unorginate Father. Salvation is for the soul alone; the body is by nature corruptible. He (Basilides) says that even the prophecies themselves came from the rulers who made the world, and that the law in particular came from their chief, him who led the people out of the land of Egypt".<sup>64</sup>

Their contempt for the Law and the Lawmaker is clearly expressed in their writings; they felt no obligation towards either of them: "All the prophets and the law spoke from the Demiurge, a silly god (in his view), and they were foolish and knew nothing".<sup>65</sup> "Therefore the commandments of the Old and the New Testaments are superfluous, if anyone is saved, as Valentinus says, by nature, or if anyone is faithful and elect by nature, as Basilides supposes".<sup>66</sup>

On the contrary, some of them expressed their antinomianism by the desire to do everything forbidden by the Law: The *archons* made the Law to make man slave, therefore complete freedom consisted of a systematic violation of the precepts of the Law. The Carpocratians, for instance, had to commit every kind of deed, because if they had not been in every action of the world, something was lacking in their freedom and the angels who made the world would again send them into bodies. When, however, they had committed everything, they were free from the power of these angels, and could ascend to God who is above the Demiurge.<sup>67</sup> The Cainites believed that an angel was present at every sinful and base action they committed, and therefore they said: "O thou angel, I make use of thy work; O thou power, I accomplish thy deed".<sup>68</sup> The different acts forbidden by the Law are thus closely connected with the angels who made the world in the same way as the different parts of the soul and the body were connected with the *archons* and angels. The connection between the precepts of the Law and the angels on the one hand, and the different parts of the human body and the angels on the other, draw together the social reality of the Law, the mythological superstructure, and the human body. It is thus likely that the comprehension of each area reflects, enforces and determines the comprehension of the other areas.

Generally speaking, the gnostic, with his faith in the free and unbound spirit and fettered by the archontic soul and material body—which together make up a structured system of evil—was not likely to have had any sympathy with any form of social system. According to Douglas, this way of comprehending the body reveals that social forms have no meaning. The society is a system which does not function, and the social experience is that of man being in the clutches of its evil powers. The body becomes a symbol of evil in contrast to the pure spirit. Everything which fetters the spirit to the body, as for example sexuality, also symbolizes evil. The confirmation of this type of belief is found in the bodily ecstasy, which is the true proof of being outside the body. This type of belief is found in the millenarian movements.<sup>69</sup> The gnostic no longer had any interest in the usual human societies or in social obligations, but had joined "The Acosmic Brotherhood of Salvation",<sup>70</sup> a society consisting of the spiritual selves of man. He had separated himself

from the societies of the world, be it the Jewish community, the Christian Church or the Roman Empire—but he had not yet reached his final destination in the World Above. He was in a transitional state, and his social group had the characteristics of a liminal society, termed by Turner as *communitas*.<sup>71</sup>

According to Turner, *communitas* is that which emerges where social structure does not exist. It takes place in liminality and has an aspect of potentiality. In primitive religions, *communitas* exists only in the liminal phase and is dissolved when the neophytes are aggregated into the structured society. In societies with an increasing specialization, it may become an institutionalized state and become permanent, as was the case in gnosticism.

*Communitas* is a simple social structure, a relatively undifferentiated community of equal individuals under the authority of the elders or the instructors. Family-bonds or obligations are of no significance, position in a status-hierarchy no longer counts, personal property does not exist, sexual ties are insignificant. The different aspects of *communitas* are found to a greater or lesser degree in the different gnostic movements. Basically, a *communitas* always confronts a structured society, be it in the liminal transition of primitive religions or as a permanent institution in other religions. Therefore *communitas* has two directions: opposition to the existing structure—an anti-structure, and maintenance of the communion on which it is built. Both directions are clearly present in the gnostic religion. The anti-structure of gnostic *communitas* is revealed in its antinomian character, be it as freedom from or as rebellion against the Law; in the violating of family-ties, either in the form of absolute ascetism or as promiscuity; and in the abolishment of status-distinctions. *Communitas* is established upon the principle of equality within. According to the Carpocratian sect, “The righteousness of God is a communion with equality ... he makes no distinction of rich or poor, people or ruler, foolish and wise, female and male, free and slave”.<sup>72</sup> The usual form of address among the gnostics was “brothers” and “sisters”. According to Plotinus they called even the lowest man brother.<sup>73</sup> They regarded themselves as being without external domination, and used the designation “the generation without a king”.<sup>74</sup> No designations existed between the heretics described by Tertullian, even their cult-roles were not

fixed, but were continually changing.<sup>75</sup> The Carpocratians had no private property, but owned everything in common. Likewise several of the Nag-Hammadi texts stress the evil of property.<sup>76</sup> Ecstasy was a means of revelation. Valentinus' disciple, Marcus, is said to have given his female-followers the ability to prophecy as a special token of spiritual grace.<sup>77</sup> The libertine sects described by Epiphanius made use of sexual practices as an instrument for immediate communion.<sup>78</sup>

The metaphor used for *communitas* is simple. It is the Pauline image of Christ as the head and the *ecclesia* as the body. The *Interpretation of Knowledge* from Nag Hammadi concentrates upon the organization of the congregation.<sup>79</sup> Weight is laid on the equality of the members who all belong to the same body, vis-à-vis their spiritual head who is Christ. Although some of them were more richly bestowed with charisma, e.g. the gift of prophecy and spiritual speech, these were in reality gifts which belonged to all the members equally, therefore those who possessed these gifts were to share them with their fellow-members. The tractate reflects a *pneumatic*-charismatic organization of the community in contrast to the hierarchical order of the Catholic Church.<sup>80</sup>

A special problem is the role played by women among the gnostic sects. On the one hand, they were permitted a rather free position in relation to the position offered to women in the Christian religion.<sup>81</sup> On the other hand, there was a strong rejection of femininity in the Nag Hammadi-texts. The female nature and especially female sexuality had a negative symbolic value, and were strongly condemned. This apparent contradiction can easily be solved. In a liminal community—at least ideally—the sex-distinctions are wiped out and transcended. Women are admitted on the condition that their sexual natures are repressed and in this way neutralized. An example is *The Dialogue of the Saviour* where Mary together with Judas and Matthew receive the special teaching of the Lord, but He bids them among other things to “pray in the place where there is no woman (and) Destroy the works of femaleness”.<sup>82</sup>

## IV

Victor W. Turner has pointed out that *gnosis* is obtained during the liminal period. It is a period of instruction and reflection intended to transform the nature of the neophyte and make him into another kind of human being. In this process myths and symbols have paradigmatic functions, not as models for behaviour, but on a higher level as components in a dialectical soteriological process.<sup>83</sup> Culture is torn apart and its factors are recombined in strange patterns and shapes which—with a loan from Paul Ricoeur—“Gives rise to thought”,<sup>84</sup>—and finally recombined in a meaningful way in relation to the state to come.<sup>85</sup> In gnosticism, two examples will illustrate this.

The demiurge and his mother, central characters in the myths, act in different ways within a liminal context as symbols or paradigms of the liminal situation. Ialdabaoth, the sinister, frightening but also comical maker of the material world is a negative paradigm of liminal man. His place is between the spiritual world above and the material world below. He is a monstrous and disproportioned being with the face of a lion, or of both a lion and a serpent, with fiery eyes and sometimes with snake-like legs.<sup>86</sup> He is born as an abortion, conceived without a father.<sup>87</sup> He is androgynous and because of his double-sex capable of producing out of himself.<sup>88</sup> He is creative, but never original: His creativity is an outburst of his delight of imitations.<sup>89</sup> He repeatedly reveals his ignorance of the existential structure, which is based on the distinction between *pneuma*/lack of *pneuma*.<sup>90</sup> By being a caricature of material man, he becomes as a soteriological paradigm a component in a dialectical process through which a new and spiritual concept of man is generated: In his lack of structure, both on the external and the internal level, he can be compared with the Trickster, which according to Turner, is a symbol of the liminal personality.<sup>91</sup>

The negative aspects of liminality have their counterpart in another liminal entity in the gnostic mythological universe, who, like Ialdabaoth, belongs to the intermediate zone. This is the mother of the demiurge. Her name is Sophia—Wisdom. Her place is in the eighth sphere above the seven spheres of the *archons*, but

below the spiritual world. Both because of her mythological placement and because of the functions she fulfills, she is entitled to be called a liminal entity.

Originally Sophia belonged in the World above, but either because of an urge to know the Father, or in order to create something of her own and thus imitate the Father, she conceives by herself alone.<sup>92</sup> She gives birth to what is characterized as an abortion. This is the demiurge Ialdabaoth. Because of her transgression she can no longer dwell in her original home. But because of her repentance and sorrow she is permitted to stay in the highest part of the intermediate zone, just below the spiritual world, waiting for her final salvation.<sup>93,94</sup> When the consequences of her fall are wiped out, she will again be admitted into that world. In this way Sophia becomes both the initiator and the symbol of the fall, and also the initiator and the symbol of the salvation.

Gnostic religion is founded upon a tension between spirit and matter. This tension is both the result of and the reflection of a tension within God and within man. This tension leads in the elaborated systems to endless lines of emanations which nevertheless cannot hide the fact that it is impossible to resolve this tension on a logical level. It can only be solved within the world of symbols. The structuralistic axiom that the elements of a cultural system can be reduced to binary polarities is made relevant by the dualistic character of the gnostic religion. In gnostic systems the binary oppositions are loaded with meaning, and structuralism therefore becomes a tool for the history of religion. According to Lévi-Strauss, "Mythical thought always works from the awareness of oppositions towards their progressive mediations".<sup>95</sup> The basic polarity of spirit and matter is mediated by the element of the soul which may participate either on the spiritual level and then proceed upwards or on the material level and then move downwards. Mythologically, this polarity is concentrated in the figure of Sophia that unites the components of both the fallen state and the state of salvation, and thus expresses the gnostic tension of the divided self. The Ophites called her, according to Irenaeus, Sophia *Prounikos*, which means Wisdom Sexual Desire, a characteristic which sums up the core of her character and reveals its tension.<sup>96</sup> The conflict between being in God and not being in God is systematized in the

gnostic myths of passage and is expressed through different levels of existence, with the spiritual world above and the material world below symbolizing the two polar states of being, and with the intermediate realm of liminality between. According to Turner, “It is interesting to note, how, by the principle of the economy (or parsimony) of symbolic reference, logically antithetical processes of death and growth may be represented by the same tokens, ... This coincidence of opposite processes and notions in a single representation characterizes the peculiar unity of the liminal: that which is neither this nor that, and yet is both”.<sup>97</sup> The description fits Sophia. She is an interstructural entity who represents the two opposed states of fall and salvation in one single figure. She lives out the tension of gnostic life, connecting in one powerful symbol the previous state of the fall and the coming state of salvation, and is therefore a most effective liminal symbol.

The gnostic is no longer a member of the worldly society nor is he ruled over by the God of this world, but all the same he has not yet attained full salvation. On the contrary, he lives in continuous liminality. Likewise, Sophia is not admitted into the fullness of the world above, but must wait outside in the intermediate zone until the consummation of time: “And she was taken up not to her own aeon but above her son, that she might be in the ninth until she has corrected her deficiency”.<sup>98</sup> Sophia is still ambiguous and therefore dangerous. This is a striking characteristic of those going through liminality. According to Mary Douglas, “Danger lies in transitional states, simply because transition is neither one state nor the next, it is undefinable. The person who must pass from one to another is himself in danger and emanates danger to others”.<sup>99</sup> The Valentinians taught that a great disturbance occurred among the other aeons because of Sophia’s vain attempt to know the Father. Sophia herself was allowed to stay within *pleroma*, but her thought, which is called “an abortion” and is identical with the lower Sophia, was separated from her and cast outside: “He immediately separated the abortion of Sophia—which was without form, had been born of one (only) and without marriage-partner—from the entirety of the aeons in order that the perfect aeons might not be embarrassed on seeing it because of its shapelessness”.<sup>100</sup> The lower Sophia has no structure and is therefore a danger and an embar-

rassment to those within the existing structure. She must remain outside until she is formed and informed and thereby becomes in complete accordance with the structured society of the aeons.

The liminal character of gnostic religion makes the archontic realm of the cosmos of special importance in gnostic mythology. There is a clear correspondence between the monsters and terrors of that realm, continually dwelt upon in the myths and painstakingly depicted, and the "betwixt and between" status of the gnostic believer. This stage, however, is transitory. In the end the saved will reveal their true nature just as moths coming out of the pupa.<sup>101</sup> In some of the Nag Hammadi scriptures, a ritual-pattern of enthronement is unveiled.<sup>102</sup> The enthronement takes place at the ascension of the soul through the spheres and includes an unction. In the *Hyp. Arch.* the coming of the True Man is coupled with the bestowal of ultimate knowledge and anointing with the Unction of the Life Eternal. This anointing, which the True Man has from the undominated generation may be viewed "as part of a royal investiture ceremony".<sup>103</sup> The saved are those who belong to the generation which does not have a king.<sup>104</sup> On the contrary, they have themselves become kings and triumphantly leave the sphere of the *archons'* domain.<sup>105</sup> The enthronement of the saved is connected with the final destruction of the *archons*; the *archons* will go to perdition.<sup>106</sup> These two mythologems, the enthronement of the soul and the destruction of the *archons*, are connected, and together signify the end of liminality. In the liminal period, the *archons* appeared to be strong while the gnostics weak. This reflects in a symbolic way an important feature of liminality; that of status reversal: "*Crudely put, the liminality of the strong is weakness—of the weak, strength. Or again, the liminality of the wealth and nobility is poverty and pauperism—of poverty, ostentation and pseudohierarchy*".<sup>107</sup>

In conclusion, gnostic religion can be described as a religion where man faces an existential dilemma. The dilemma is the human problem accentuated by a dualistic religious system: How shall man overcome the tension between his spiritual self and his material self? Is he destined to dwell in the world of matter or can he transcend into the spiritual world? The intention of gnostic religion was to overcome the dilemma by making its two horns into the two poles of a dynamic movement, which gradually trans-

formed the biological human being into a spiritual entity. For this purpose, life was conceived of as a period of permanent liminality and religion became “*gnosis*”.

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<sup>1</sup> Victor W. Turner, “Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in *Rites de Passage*”, *The Forest of Symbols*, N.Y. 1967, pp. 93-111.

<sup>2</sup> The history of religions insists on non-reductionistic methods to discover the meaning of religious facts. This attitude rules out theories which “explain” religious facts on the basis of sociological or psychological factors. Traditionally, the discipline also rules out explanations referring to God, although it has always been more uncertain with regard to theories that refer to the concept of “the sacred”. Its problem is to avoid reductionistic explanations and to find perspectives and points of reference which are neither theological nor ontological. Cf. also H. H. Penner, “Myth and Ritual: A Wasteland or a Forest of Symbols?”, *History and Theory*, Studies in the Philosophy of History. Beihefte 8: On Method in the History of Religions, ed. J. S. Helfer, Connect, 1968, pp. 46-57.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, Selected Essays, N.Y. 1973, p. 125.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Paul Ricoeur, “Qu’est-ce qu’un texte? expliquer et comprendre”, *Hermeneutik und Dialektik*, vol. 2, ed. R. Bubner et al., Tübingen, 1970, pp. 181-200.

<sup>5</sup> A system of religious meaning, as gnosticism, could in similar ways be correlated with historical and psychological realities, as done by Hans Jonas in *The Gnostic Religion*, Boston, 1967.

<sup>6</sup> A. L. Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, London, 1960.

<sup>7</sup> Turner, 1967, p. 94.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 110.

<sup>11</sup> V. W. Turner, *The Ritual Process*, Chic., 1969, pp. 125 ff.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 129 ff.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 107 ff.

<sup>14</sup> See John D. Turner, “The Gnostic Threefold Path to Enlightenment”, *Novum Testamentum* XXII, 4 (1980), pp. 332 ff.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. H. Jonas, “Myth and Mysticism: A Study of Objectification and Interiorization in Religious Thought”, *Philosophical Essays. From Ancient Creed to Technological Man*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1974, pp. 291-304.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. R. Reitzenstein, *Die Hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen*, Darmstadt, 1966, p. 243.

<sup>17</sup> Hippolyt, *Refutatio* V 9, 4; CG VI, 6 *The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth (Disc.)* 57:18-25; CG V, 5 *The Apocalypse of Adam (Apoc.Adam)* 85:22-31; CG II, 6 *The Exegesis on the Soul (Exeg.Soul)* 131:34-132:2.

<sup>18</sup> Illustrating examples are the rituals found in *The Second Book of Jeu, The Books of Jeu and the untitled text in the Bruce Codex*, ed. C. Schmidt, transl. and notes V. MacDermot, (Nag Hammadi Studies 13), Leiden, 1978.

<sup>19</sup> The eucharist may be connected with both or be a rite which was regularly repeated. The eucharist, however, was not one of the important sacraments, cf. W. Bousset, *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis*, Göttingen, 1907, p. 305; H.-G. Gaffron, *Studien zum koptischen Philippusevangelium unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Sakramente*, Bonn, 1969, pp. 171-174.

<sup>20</sup> V. W. Turner, "Myth and Symbol", *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, N.Y. 1968, p. 576.

<sup>21</sup> Turner, 1967, p. 96; Turner, 1968, p. 576.

<sup>22</sup> *Ap. John* (II, 1) 21:4-13; CG II, 7 *The Book of Thomas the Contender* (*Thom. Cont.*) 138:39-139:12; CG VII, 4 *The Teaching of Silvanus* (*Teach. Silv.*) 106:9-14; CG VIII, 1 *Zostrianos* (*Zost.*) 1:10-21; CG VIII, 2 *The Letter of Peter to Philip* (*Ep. Pet. Phil.*) 137:6-10.

<sup>23</sup> *Exc. Theod.* 80, 1.

<sup>24</sup> Quoted from Jonas, p. 58.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. below, p. 18.

<sup>26</sup> Turner, 1967, p. 107 f.

<sup>27</sup> Turner, 1967, p. 96; Turner 1968, p. 580.

<sup>28</sup> See especially Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger, An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, London, 1979, p. 121; and E. Leach, *Culture and Communication. The logic by which symbols are connected*, N.Y. 1981, p. 62.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. P. Fredriksen, "Hysteria and the Gnostic Myths of Creation", *Vigiliae Christianae* 33 (1979), pp. 287-290.

<sup>30</sup> CG II, 5 *On the Origin of the World* (*Orig. World*) 99: 2-11; CG II, 4 *The Hypostasis of the Archons* (*Hyp. Arch.*) 94:9-19; Hippolyt, *Refutatio*, VI, 30, 6 ff.

<sup>31</sup> *Orig. World* 99: 17-20.

<sup>32</sup> Hippolyt, *Refutatio* V, 19, 11-20. See also Epiphanius, *Panarion*, XXV, 5, 1-3; Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* I, 31, 2.

<sup>33</sup> CG VII, 1 *The Paraphrase of Shem* (*Paraph. Shem*) 5:22 ff.

<sup>34</sup> *Paraph. Shem* 27: 2-5.

<sup>35</sup> *Paraph. Shem* 18: 34-19:4.

<sup>36</sup> Fredriksen 1979.

<sup>37</sup> Arist., *Gen. An.*, 729a 9 f.; 730a 24 f.

<sup>38</sup> Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.*, I, 2, 4.

<sup>39</sup> Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.*, I, 4, 1-2.

<sup>40</sup> Turner, 1967, pp. 27-29.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>42</sup> Hippolyt, *Refutatio*, V, 19, 11.

<sup>43</sup> *Ap. John* (II, 1) 31:4; *Paraph. Shem.* 1:15; 19:27, 45:34.

<sup>44</sup> CG I, 3 *The Treatise on Resurrection* (*Treat. Res.*) 47:17-19.

<sup>45</sup> *Exeg. Soul* 127:21-22.

<sup>46</sup> *Exeg. Soul* 131:13-132:2.

<sup>47</sup> See F. Wisse, "On Exegeting 'The Exegesis on the Soul' ", in *Les textes de Nag Hammadi*, ed. J.-E. Menard, (NHS 7), Leiden 1975, pp. 72 ff.

<sup>48</sup> Hippolyt, *Refutatio*, VII, 21, 1 ff.; Epiphanius, *Panarion*, XXVI, 4, 1 ff.

<sup>49</sup> Quotations are made from W. Foerster, *Gnosis. A Selection of Gnostic Texts*, English transl., ed. by R. McL. Wilson, Oxford, 1972; and from *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, ed. J. M. Robinson, Leiden, 1977.

- <sup>50</sup> Clement of Alex., *Excerpta ex Theodoto* 68; cf. also 79; Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* I, 21, 5.
- <sup>51</sup> *Zost.* 131: 5-8.
- <sup>52</sup> H. G. Kippenberg, "Versuch einer soziologischen Verortung des antiken Gnostizismus", *Numen* 17 (1970), pp. 211-232.
- <sup>53</sup> E. H. Pagels, "'The Demiurge and his Archons'—A Gnostic View of the Bishop and Presbyters?" *Harvard Theological Journal* 69 (1976), pp. 301-324.
- <sup>54</sup> Douglas 1979, pp. 114 ff.
- <sup>55</sup> See especially B. Pearson, "Biblical Exegesis in Gnostic Literature", Supplementary Volume I to *Sion*, ed. M. E. Stone, Jerusalem, 1975, pp. 70-80; also R. Van den Broek, "The Creation of Adam's Psychic Body in the Apocryphon of John", *Studies in Gnosticism and Hellenistic Religions*, (presented to Gilles Quispel on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday), ed. by R. Van den Broek and M. J. Vermaseren, Leiden, 1980, pp. 38-57.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ap. John* (II, 1) 11:34-35.
- <sup>57</sup> Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* I, 24, 3.
- <sup>58</sup> Epiphanius, *Panarion*. XXIV, 7, 6.
- <sup>59</sup> *Ap. John* (II, 1) 15:29-17:31.
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 17:32-19:6.
- <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 20:28-21:13.
- <sup>62</sup> See Jonas 1970, pp. 156-161.
- <sup>63</sup> Gen. 1:28.
- <sup>64</sup> Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* I, 24, 4-5.
- <sup>65</sup> Hippolyt, *Refutatio*, VI, 35, 1.
- <sup>66</sup> Clement of Alex., *Stromata*, V, 3; see also Origen, *Contra Celsum*, VI, 31; Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* I, 30, 10; 23, 4; Epiphanius, *Panarion*, XL, 2, 8; Clement of Alex., *Stromata*, VII, 4.
- <sup>67</sup> Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* I, 25, 4.
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.* I, 31, 2.
- <sup>69</sup> M. Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, N.Y., 1970, pp. XII-XIII.
- <sup>70</sup> Jonas, 1970, p. 264.
- <sup>71</sup> Turner, 1969, pp. 96-165.
- <sup>72</sup> Clement of Alex., *Stromata*, III, 2.
- <sup>73</sup> *Enneaden* II, 9, 18;
- <sup>74</sup> *Hyp. Arch.* 97:4-5; *Orig. World* 125:3-7; 126:36-127:17; *Apoc. Adam* 82:19-20; Hippolyt, *Refutatio*, V, 8, 2.
- <sup>75</sup> Clement of Alex., *Stromata*, III, 2.
- <sup>76</sup> *Gosp. Thom.* 44:2-35; 51:4-5; CG VI, 1 *The Acts of Peter (ActsPet.)* 11:27-12:13.
- <sup>77</sup> Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* I, 13, 3-4.
- <sup>78</sup> Epiphanius, *Panarion*, XXVI, 4, 1 ff.
- <sup>79</sup> CG XI, 1 *Interp. Know.* esp. 15-21.
- <sup>80</sup> See K. Koschorke, "Gnostic Instructions on the Organization of the Congregation: The Tractate Interpretation of Knowledge from CG XI", *The Rediscovery of Gnosticism*, vol. II, ed. B. Layton, Leiden, 1981, pp. 757-769.
- <sup>81</sup> See E. Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*, London, 1979, pp. 48-70.
- <sup>82</sup> CG III, 5 *Dial. Sav.* 144:18-20; cf. also *Gosp. Thom.* 51:18-26.
- <sup>83</sup> Turner, 1968, p. 577.
- <sup>84</sup> *The Symbolism of Evil*, N.Y. 1969, pp. 347 ff.
- <sup>85</sup> Turner, 1967, p. 106.
- <sup>86</sup> *Hyp. Arch.* 94:16-17; *Orig. World* 100:5-7; *Ap. John* (II, 1) 10:7-10.

- <sup>87</sup> *Ap. John* (II, 1) 9:25-10:7; *Orig. World* 99:23-100:1; *Hyp. Arch.* 94:9-17.
- <sup>88</sup> *Hyp. Arch.* 94:34-95:4; *Orig. World* 100:7.
- <sup>89</sup> Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* I, 5, 3.
- <sup>90</sup> For instance, he does not distinguish between the psychic and the pneumatic Eve, the material serpent and its spiritual counterpart, between the crucified Jesus and the spiritual Christ.
- <sup>91</sup> Turner, 1969, pp. 580-581.
- <sup>92</sup> *Ap. John* (II, 1) 9:25-10:19; *Hyp. Arch.* (II, 4) 94:4-19; Hippolyt, *Refutatio*, VI, 30, 6-8.
- <sup>93</sup> *Ap. John* (II, 1) 13:32-14:13; Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* I, 7, 1.
- <sup>94</sup> Cf. below, p. 35-36.
- <sup>95</sup> "The Structural Study of Myth", *Reader in Comparative Religion*, ed. W. A. Lessa and E. Z. Vogt, N.Y. 1979, p. 194.
- <sup>96</sup> Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* I, 30, 3 (also by the Barbelognostics, I, 29, 4).
- <sup>97</sup> Turner, 1967, p. 99.
- <sup>98</sup> *Ap. John* (II, 1) 14:9-13.
- <sup>99</sup> Douglas, 1979, p. 96.
- <sup>100</sup> Hippolyt, *Refutatio*, VI, 31, 4.
- <sup>101</sup> Turner, 1967, p. 94.
- <sup>102</sup> M. Scopello, "Un rituel idéal d'intronisation dans trois textes gnostiques de Nag Hammadi", (NHS 14), ed. R. McL. Wilson, Leiden, 1978, pp. 91-96.
- <sup>103</sup> B. Layton, "The Hypostasis of the Archons (Conclusion)", *Harvard Theological Review* 69 (1976), pp. 78-79.
- <sup>104</sup> *Ibid.* p. 79.
- <sup>105</sup> *Hyp. Arch.* 96:29-97:14; *Orig. World* 125:32-127:17.
- <sup>106</sup> *Orig. World* 125:11-12.
- <sup>107</sup> Turner, 1969, p. 200.

## COMMERCE WITH THE SUPERNATURALS

(Review article)

R. J. Z. WERBLOWSKY

Whatever else religion may be, in most cases it is also concerned with man's contacts and intercourse with the supernaturals (plural), or with those less supernatural who can mediate relationship with the Supernatural. There are "positive" and "negative" supernaturals (cf. the title of the 1982 meeting of the German Association for the History of Religions "Dämonen und Gegen-götter"; see NUMEN vol. 29, 1982, p. 287), not to speak of the ambiguous and ambivalent ones.

Witches, witchcraft, witch-hunting etc. immediately come to mind. But the very notion of such a strict dichotomy is perhaps a product of civilisation suggests H-P Duerr,<sup>1</sup> whose main problem is precisely the transition from the period of the "Eternal Ones of the Dream" to that of the strict disjunction between the "savage" and the "civilised" (or should we say nature and culture?). For a long time witches had been sitting on the fence, as it were, fulfilling a mediating function. Then they were expelled, merely to return into our lives in a grotesquely distorted form: negative mediation. Movement between the two spheres—especially flying—plays a role in this mythology (not least with regard to the Witches' Sabbath), and Duerr deals sensitively with the question of the *Fahrenden*. His perceptive discussion incidentally makes the reader wonder whether there is not more than meets the eye in the development of the "virtue" of *stabilitas loci*. That the flight viz. flight-illusion is accomplished by the use of appropriate ointments is taken for granted by Duerr with all modern anthropologists. M. Harner's basic *Hallucinogenes and Shamanism* (1974) is of course mentioned but almost lost in the 59 pages (!) of closely printed bibliography. Duerr's 161 pp. of text plus 184 pp. of closely printed notes should provide ample food for thought and even cultural self-examination.

Once witchcraft had become a major obsession in late medieval Europe, and the Holy Inquisition entrusted with its eradication, new elements entered the situation providing full-time occupation to historical scholarship. To give but one example: outside Spain the Inquisition kept treating witchcraft suspects exactly as the Spanish Inquisition treated *marranos*: not only confessions were extorted by torture but also the names of "accomplices", and thus ever widening circles of criminals and culprits were continually produced. But oddly enough, by the middle of the 16th cent. the Spanish Inquisition had limited the use of torture in witchcraft cases, and confession under torture could incriminate only the accused himself but never others mentioned by him. When the inquisitor Alonzo Salazar de Frias made his visitation to Navarre in 1611, he ordered women that had confessed to carnal intercourse with the devil to be physically examined by "worthy matrons". They were all found to be virgins.

What it all boils down to is that the time has passed when one could write about witches and witchcraft in general. Only painstakingly detailed research, by periods and by areas, holds any promise of progress. (Cf. e.g., Canon Isaias de Rosa Pereira's "Processos de feitiçaria e de bruxaria na Inquisição de Portugal" in *Anais da Academia Portuguesa de História*, 2nd series, 24, 1977). Gustav Henningsen, Director of the Danish Folklore Archives in Copenhagen, is one of the most indefatigable workers in this field. His *The Witches' Advocate*<sup>2</sup> deals exclusively with Basque witchcraft cases between 1609-1614, in a volume of 607 pp. Few studies give us so accurate an insight into the mechanisms of suspicion, accusation, confession and incrimination, as well as the anatomy of mass hysteria (which, Henningsen argues, can create new phenomena and not merely revive vestiges of alleged old pagan cults), not to speak of recipes for making flying ointments. But the greatest boon of this book is the study of Salazar de Frias, well known but not sufficiently known for a long time, and already mentioned earlier in this article. Whilst engaged in his research on witchcraft in Spain, Henningsen discovered the long-lost Salazar papers and was thus enabled to go far beyond H. C. Lea and J. C. Baroja in reconstructing an important chapter in the "pre-humanist" change of climate which ultimately led to what many years ago Charles

Williams (1941) had called the "suspension of belief". Still, also this impressive study is not without its problems. The Spanish Inquisition had dealt with witchcraft in a very "untypical" way throughout the 16th cent., and Salazar, great as he was, had had predecessors. By focussing on 1609-14, one short period is sliced out of a larger historical context, and the total perspective inevitably suffers. Other sources besides the Inquisition records must be used in order to obtain a more complete picture, last but not least to pinpoint local witchcraft traditions as well as sundry other facts that may considerably qualify both the author's view concerning the causality of the witch craze (which, when all is said and done, did not drop out of the blue as a sudden epidemic of mass hysteria) and his estimate of the "revolutionary" character of Salazar's contribution. Henningsen's 607 pp., whilst full of valuable material and insights, also show how much work still remains to be done.

Witchcraft and sorcery, in a Christian context, imply the devil and Satan, and the latter implies the Antichrist. Of course the ordinary witch had no direct contact with the Antichrist himself, the figure of which looms so large, and often so decisively, over medieval imagination. Here it was theological literature (beginning with the N.T.) and exegesis, apocalyptic traditions and creative imagination—both learned and popular—which boosted this figure to the proportions which he deserved as the counterpart of Christ. To write the "biography" of Antichrist one must have recourse not only to texts (theological works as well as the whole gamut of literature: pamphlets, legends etc.) but also to art, especially illustrations of mss. The biography should also include the history of identifications which, in their turn, often also involved correlations with the "number of the Beast" or other supporting data: who was considered by his orthodox or sectarian opponents as the Antichrist. It had always been taken for granted that the Antichrist is born of a Jew. The Protestant identification of the Antichrist with the Papacy made this particular pedigree improbable, though the general relationship was preserved also by Luther's statement that the Roman Church was the Synagogue of Satan. Mr Emerson<sup>3</sup> has given us an exemplary survey of medieval apocalypticism and of the figure of Antichrist in Literature and Art up to the Renaissance.

The book will be gratefully received and used by all students of the subject.

Christians were not the only ones to be obsessed by demonic supernaturals. Lilith, the baby-snatching and killing demoness was well and alive in medieval Judaism (and probably in some sections of contemporary Jewry). The first demon-wife of Adam has a long and fascinating history from her Babylonian beginnings to contemporary practice. Somehow this Babylonian figure made her way into Near Eastern folk beliefs and practice (legends, magic incantation texts and amulets), and became firmly lodged in Jewish folklore. To this day there are circles where no woman in childbed would do without the protection of an anti-Lilith amulet, especially in the cradle of the newborn. S. Hurwitz<sup>4</sup> has provided the first complete survey to date of this intriguing subject. Since the emphasis is on the demonic-feminine aspect he also uses texts and sources that exhibit Lilith-characteristics even if the name is lacking. Hence his account takes us from Ishtar and Lamashtu to the Arslan Tash texts and the Babylonian magic bowls (Layard and Montgomery), hellenistic magic texts, talmudic, gnostic, folkloristic and kabbalistic material etc. The first part of his study will be gratefully welcomed by folklorists and historians of religion. But as the subtitle indicates, the subject is not treated for its own sake only. As an analytical psychologist of the Jungian school, the author uses Lilith as grist to the Jungian mill, and in a second part the psychological aspects are discussed, i.e., the mythological and archetypal lines are drawn out, connecting the ancient material with contemporary psychological clinical experience and interpretation, including also the analysis of a modern case (the dreams and drawings of a young man). This type of writing is standard Jungian procedure and not necessarily to everybody's taste. But there is no harm in occasionally confronting historians of religion with the problem of the psychological realities and implications behind myths and beliefs, and with the possibly permanent significance they may possess in the human soul.

Every book by Prof. Peter Brown<sup>5</sup> is a gift to his colleagues. The continuity between the hero-worship of classical antiquity and the Christian cult of saints, though the latter is shaped by specifically Christian ideals of holiness, has long been a commonplace. The

original Christian hero was the martyr. His cult centred on his tomb and relics which served as a concrete point of contact with the saint who, somehow still connected with his tomb but at the same time in heaven, could act as mediator and intercessor with God. The ordinary dead are prayed for; the saint is prayed to. But all this traditional wisdom still leaves a lot unexplained, for there is more novelty than continuity in the new cult. The heroes are new, the sites are new. In fact, as Peter Brown makes clear, the "map of the supernatural world" was new. If the educated upper classes too were addicted to saints (and creatively addicted: poetry, literature and the arts bear witness), then the historical and social realities of the 4th-6th centuries have to be taken into account and closely interrogated regarding the functions which the cult of saints could have played in the harsh world of the declining Roman empire. The saints mediated mercy and power, that is merciful power, by a projection on the unseen world and by a transformation of the this-worldly client/patron relationship. The "invisible companion" was also the invisible patron, visible perhaps in his relics. If relics and pilgrimages go together, then the saints also affect geography, or rather the dialectics of presence, proximity and distance. And this dialectic undergoes further extension and differentiation by the transferral of relics. "If the holy could travel, then the distance between the believer and the place of the holy ceased to be a fixed, physical distance. It took on the shifting quality of late Roman social relationships". Peter Brown pursues his sophisticated analysis by means of the examination of certain key terms and concepts. The reader feels rewarded *sicut qui invenit spolia magna*.

At this point we should remind ourselves that the Holy Inquisition was kept busy not only by witches and other miscreants, but also by apparitions of the Blessed Virgin and sundry Saints—mainly to shepherds and children. Testimonies (notarised by church and village authorities) are plentiful in diocesan and national archives. W. A. Christian<sup>6</sup> painstakingly describes the accounts of these apparitions as presented in the interrogations and investigations from 1399 to the early 16th cent. The author thus studies much more than the religion of rural Spain in the period under discussion. The real problem is the rise, diffusion and decline of such apparitions, the immediate causes as well as the background part

played by traditional monastic lore, shrine legends and popular sermons. We are, as it were, given a glimpse into the pre-history of La Salette, Lourdes, Fatima and more recent cases in Spain. More interesting even than the outburst of apparitions is their cessation. The author of course does not speak of cessation but of their (successful) repression by the Inquisition. Whilst not part of Spanish rural history, the author wisely introduces and discusses the case of Jeanne d'Arc for the simple and valid reason that it provided the ecclesiastical authorities with criteria for judging apparitions. A goodly part of the book (pp. 240-331) gives the original Spanish texts of the documents on which the whole study is based.

There are other means of contact with the world of the Spirit than apparitions. The Holy Spirit manifests itself in glossolalia, and the study of the speaking in tongues is not the exclusive province of N.T. scholars. In fact, we are witnessing a revival of Pentecostalism not only in Protestant "fringe sects" but also in the "mainline" churches and among Roman Catholics. Prof. C. G. Williams has tried, with moderate success, to write the history of this Christian phenomenon against a comparative background and paying full attention to modern, psychological and anthropological (shamanism!) research. Whilst much in this book is straightforward history (N.T., the origins of the pentecostal movement, classic pentecostalism and the new "neo-pentecostalism"), other sections, though designed to render discussion of the phenomenon more complete, leave many questions as to substance and relevance. The "ecstatic element" in Hebrew prophecy seems—as the author himself notes—to have little direct "lineal" connection with his subject, and also the kabbalistic, sufi and Indian "analogies" seem to serve little purpose except to show that the uttering of holy sounds is a world-wide phenomenon. But precisely his very useful and comprehensive discussion of the "mysticism of sound" (a subject of prime importance to all students of religion) illustrates the vast chasm separating the ritual or magical use of sacred sounds or syllables or words from the utterance, in a state of enthusiasms or possession, of inspired speech (viz. gibberish). The author writes as a theologian, but as one who feels that theology has to take into account more than the Christian and pentecostal material alone.

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<sup>1</sup> Hans Peter Duerr, *Traumzeit: Ueber die Grenze zwischen Wildnis und Zivilisation*, Syndikat (Frankfurt a.M.), 1st ed. 1978, 5th ed. 1980, softcover, pp. 415. ISBN 3-8108-0077-5.

<sup>2</sup> Gustav Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate: Basque Witchcraft and the Spanish Inquisition 1609-1614*, The Univ. of Nevada Press (Reno, Nevada), 1980, hardcover, pp. 607, \$ 24. ISBN 0-87417-056-7.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Kenneth Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art and Literature*, Univ. of Seattle Press (Washington), 1981, hardcover, pp. x + 366. \$ 19.50. ISBN 0-295-95716-6.

<sup>4</sup> Siegmund Hurwitz, *Lilith, die erste Eva: Eine Studie über dunkle Aspekte des Weiblichen*, Daimon Verlag (Zurich), 1980, softcover, pp. 175. ISBN 3-85630-004-X.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Brown, *The cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*, Univ. of Chicago Press (Chicago), 1981, hardcover, pp. 187. ISBN 0-226-07621-0.

<sup>6</sup> William A. Christian, *Apparitions in Late Medieval and Renaissance Spain*, Princeton Univ. Press (Princeton), 1981, hardcover, pp. 349, \$ 35. ISBN 0-691-05326-X.

<sup>7</sup> Cyril G. Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit: A Study of Pentecostal Glossolalia and Related Phenomena*, Univ. of Wales Press (Cardiff), hardcover, pp. 276, £15.95. ISBN 0-7083-0758-2.

## BOOK REVIEWS

THROWER, James, *The Alternative Tradition: a Study of Unbelief in the Ancient World*—The Hague-Paris-New York, Mouton Publishers, 1980, pp. 286, clothbound DM 72.—. (ISBN 90-279-7997-9)

The basic assumption of this otherwise useful book (for first-year undergraduates) is modern ignorance. It is assumed that nobody ever read at school Cicero's *de natura deorum*, or learned about the history of *skepsis* in antiquity—from Pyrrhon to Karneades and Kleitomachos, to the New Academy, to the "Pyrrhonic revival" (e.g., Ainesidemos and the subsequent "young sceptics"). It is furthermore assumed that the average reader does not know that Renaissance and post-Renaissance scepticism (from Montaigne to Erasmus to Descartes) drew upon an old and well-known classical tradition, or that the anti-Ricci China missionaries had already in the 17th cent. made a point of stressing the (in their eyes) essentially non-religious and atheist character of Confucianism. One misses important items from the bibliography e.g., Harold W. Attridge "The philosophical critique of religion under the early empire" (in Temporini and Haase, *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, vol. 16, pts. 1 and 2) or, for India, S. C. Malik (ed.) *Dissent, Protest and Reform in Indian Civilisation* and some relevant essays by Pratap Chandra and Romila Thapar.

If, instead of announcing in a spirit of naïve 19th cent. rationalism that "the belief is still widely held [where? and by whom?] that the rejection of a religious understanding of the world ... is something of a modern phenomenon"—implying that this misconception should be corrected—the author had told us something like "it is well-known that parallel to the religious traditions of the West as well as of India and China, there also existed well-developed traditions of disbelief and doubt which deserve to be brought together in a convenient survey, much as many of the world's religions are brought together in convenient History of Religions handbooks" one would, perhaps, react more positively to this book. The perspective is unduly narrowed by the simplistic dichotomy religion *versus* "naturalism". The truth of the matter is, of course, that all the great sceptical traditions were directed against contemporaneous philosophical dogmatisms even more than against religions. Karl Kerényi (*Antike Religion*, 1971, pp. 115-8) has written in four perceptive pages more on Graeco-Roman scepticism than the volume under review.

In the circumstances it would be besides the point to take issue with the

author on his interpretation of this or that Confucian teacher. And as regards the Buddha's "atheism", whilst the question is undoubtedly of interest to innocent historians believing that the "historical" Buddha's ideas can at all be reconstructed, it is of supreme indifference to others (because badly posed). The Buddha probably accepted the traditional pantheon much as Dr Thrower and the present reviewer accept, uncritically and on the strength of their simple-minded faith in the scientists, the existence of protons or of galaxies in extra-solar space. But if the author's depressing assumptions regarding contemporary ignorance are correct—as they probably are—then his survey should be useful and instructive to many readers.

RJZW

OLSON, Alan M., ed., *Myth, Symbol, and Reality*—Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1980, xiv + 189 p.

"It is clear," writes one of the contributors to this volume, "that symbol and myth are again at the foreground of *Religionswissenschaft*," and his next words both help us to understand that interest and sum up the spirit of this collection of essays. "After decades of historical and anthropological research on the facts, there is a return to questions of meaning, with theoretical and philosophical elaborations." The search for meaning, we note, is set in opposition to mere study of the facts, a view which appears again and again in this volume and accounts for many of the strengths and weaknesses of the papers included. Meaning tends to remain elusive, its place too often filled by sentimentality and cliché; the quest, however, remains noble, and can occasionally provide insights of interpretation otherwise unavailable.

The collection's editor, for example, very nicely probes Ricoeur's attempt to supplement the "descending analytic" of criticism—getting to know something by taking it apart and scrutinizing the pieces—with the "upward movement" of interpretation: the recovery of meaning. Yet examination of reference in metaphors renders the search for meaning problematic, for the reference of a metaphor is two-way, or "split," and hence it is "impossible to adjudicate its meaning by the standards of univocity that are proper only to scientific description about reality." This problem, Olsen then suggests, points us to the "boundary character" of human meaning in general, and perhaps of reality as such, a situation which he explores briefly by drawing on Jaspers and Heidegger (the latter here

defended against Ricoeur's charge of "mystical obscurantism"). Might meaning defy not merely objectivity—a commonplace in this volume, though it is never argued—but language as such? The "is" may arise precisely "where the word breaks off."

Then again, there is the collection's high point and conclusion: a brilliant summation and passionate defense of the Platonic myths by J. N. Findlay. In the book's other essays the plea for a constructive hermeneutics never quite issues forth into the analysis called for. Even Gadamer's fine piece on "Religious and Poetical Speaking" only urges that "the whole task of hermeneutics.. (is) to let speak again what was spoken and what is fixed as spoken in the frozen form of written or printed words and letters," but Gadamer never in these pages actually arrives at such an interpretation. Findlay, however, moves from the statement that the Platonic myths ought to be taken seriously, "since they may very well be true," through a masterful summation of the principal myths, to the remarkable exposition of "an eschatology and cosmology in which I still believe." The personal credo is especially welcome here, for it both illumines his exegesis and exposes personal convictions hinted at but hidden in other essays. Here the scholarship and the passion clarify each other; objectivity is not dismissed in facile polemics against "scientism" or "oppressiveness."

Findlay's exercise in interpretation is equally welcome, in a book rife with calls for a new "relational understanding" of myth but lacking in reference to the huge literature on myth, symbol and metaphor on which one expects such a volume to draw. Indeed, the most valuable essays in the work are all of them devoted to particular texts or rituals. Howard Kee traces Isis mythology from Egyptian origins through Wisdom literature and thence to the Johannine traditions. Dennis Tedlock analyzes the interplay between text and interpretation among the Zuni. The concreteness of real cases almost redeems the generalization and self-righteousness of the many expression of what *should* be done.

Perhaps the most useful service of the volume, then, is to raise again the question of why, as Jacques Waardenburg puts it in his piece, "the last century and a half has seen a frenetic scholarly search in the West for the meaning of myths." The absent "presiding presence" of this collection, Mircea Eliade, would of course applaud that search, seeing the purpose for historians of religion in their recovery of the sacred, thereby reminding humanity of the "existential situation" hidden by secularity. Gadamer, we recall, said as much explicitly, and proceeded to relate the scholar's transmission of "what was spoken," i.e. The Word, to the unique purposes of Christian hermeneutics. It is Nietzsche, however, who is called to

mind by the longings articulated in this volume, and perhaps some of the problems bedeviling such attempts to go beyond the facts are illumined by his warning. "The tremendous historical need of our unsatisfied modern culture...what does all this point to, if not the loss of myth, the loss of the mythical home...and who would care to contribute anything to a culture that cannot be satisfied no matter how much it devours, and at whose contact the most vigorous and wholesome nourishment is changed into 'history and criticism.' " Findaly's essay excepted, the pieces collected here do nothing to prove his pessimism about the "upward movement" to myth unfounded...

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VERDU, Alfonso, *The Philosophy of Buddhism: A "Totalistic" Synthesis*, Studies in Philosophy and Religion, no. 3—The Hague, Netherlands, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers BV, 1981. ISBN 90-247-2224-1. Pages xi + 207, cloth, Dfl. 80.00/US\$ 34.50.

Professor Verdu's recent work is an impressive philosophic tour-de-force. Its basic structure is to unearth dialectical contradictions in both the "pluralistic Hīnayāna" and the "unitary Vijñānavāda" which find a synthetic resolution in the "totalistic Buddhism" of the Chinese Hua-yen school. His sources, which he takes as representative of these three forms of Buddhism, are the *Abhidharmakośa*, the *Triṃśikākārikā*, and the *Mahāyānaśraddhotpāda*, all of which he analyzes with the diligence of a philologist. Taking notions of causality as central, he finds irreducible problematics in how this notion is treated in both the *Kośa* and the *Triṃśikā*. It is only in "totalistic Buddhism", Verdu contends, that the problematics of causality are resolved. The problem is that "... the Hīnayāna schools propounded a pluralistic phenomenalism in the name of impermanence at the expense of unitary congruency, the idealist schools, through their 'ideation theories' of causation... propound[ed] a monistic unity at the expense of plurality" (p. 17). According to Verdu's view, in the Hua-yen's dialectical complementarity causation is no longer a problem but a "delight" (p. 30).

Verdu claims that his is a philosophic enquiry, not essentially wedded to Hua-yen thought. His own quest for a totalistic synthesis of pluralism and monism, rather, is expressed through Hua-yen terminologies. This is the most difficult claim for this reviewer to accept. While this work is a

brilliant exposition of Hua-yen thought, it is not so free of dogmas as might be expected. For example, Verdu reads the Vijñānavāda as indistinguishable from Upaniṣadic thought (p. 19), and he reads the *Kośa* much as Stcherbatsky did. Both of these views are necessary preliminaries for a Hua-yen conclusion, but may not necessarily embody fidelity to the intentions and contexts of the texts themselves. This present work is dogmatic in the sense that it sees earlier texts from the perspective of the Hua-yen, enforcing a hermeneutical closure on both the *Kośa* and the *Triṃśikā* that may not do full justice to their subtlety or give sufficient interpretative freedom to the reader. However, Verdu's dogmas are intelligently argued and presented with philosophic sophistication. Thus, this work's chief contribution is as an exposition of the Hua-yen, and not of Buddhism in its various and diverse forms.

The book also creatively examines such doctrines as the *trisvabhāva* ("three natures") and *trikāya* ("three bodies") ideas, showing the unique contributions to these themes offered by the Hua-yen school.

Hegelian dialectics are not far beneath the surface throughout this work, and Verdu defends his approach at some length (pp. 36-38). Indeed, it need not be problematic to employ a mode of enquiry from western philosophy to analyze Buddhist thought, especially if the author is as careful as Verdu in isolating a philosophical method from a metaphysical content. Of course, many philosophic threads are to be found within the fabric of Buddhist thought, and the Buddha was the first to point out that a philosophic position is more the product of one's predispositions than of dispassionate reason. Verdu's Hegelianism in no way intrudes upon his subject, but tends to enhance his analyses.

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SHARMA, Arvind, *The Puruṣārthas: A Study in Hindu Axiology—Asian Studies Center*, Michigan State University, 1982, 56 p.

In his foreword to this book, Arvind Sharma states, "some have lamented the lackadaisical treatment of the doctrine of the *puruṣārthas* in Hindu studies. This essay is a modest effort to rectify the situation." These words represent a fair and apt comment upon what is to follow. At 56 pages, this piece is no more than an essay. Its very size and purpose determine the fact that it must remain a modest effort rather than a major

contribution. However the corollary is that, modest effort though it might be, it does rectify a situation of comparative neglect in regard to the systematic academic treatment of the Hindu *puruṣārthas*.

In this essay, many aspects of the *puruṣārthas* are treated in a coherent and systematic fashion. The *puruṣārthas* are treated together and separately, in relation to classical Hindu thought and modern western thought. In all, this work contains twenty-two small chapters, each of which is further subdivided in order to illuminate the meaning of the Hindu *puruṣārthas*. When we add that there are two hundred and thirty-nine footnotes in addition to eighty-two bibliographical entries it will be seen that this essay is the result of assiduous research that is arranged according to a logical structure.

There is gathered together, in these pages, a mass of secondary references to the *puruṣārthas* from many varied sources. Each *puruṣārtha*, *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa*, is analysed in itself and in relation to the others. There is discussion about the order of the *puruṣārthas*, their integrality or otherwise, whether they are areas or degrees of concern as well as aims of existence, their relationship to Hindu sociology, ethics, psycho-philosophy, concepts of history, sacred texts and modern reinterpretations, and their relationship to contemporary Indian thought, modern western philosophy, and Hindu-Christian polemics.

The treatment of these topics is necessarily brief. It is also weighted in the direction of summarising secondary references as opposed to direct analysis of primary sources. In this connection some of the quotations are too long. The organising mind of Sharma is behind the whole project, and that is valuable, but too little is seen of his own insights by contrast with the many references we are given to the thoughts of others. Nevertheless the weakness of this essay is also its strength. Primary analysis of the *puruṣārthas* in the sacred texts would constitute a long and exhausting piece of research that Sharma or someone else may eventually tackle. Here we have, in manageable compass, a modest but enlightening piece of work on the study done by a number of important scholars on a significant but relatively neglected topic in Hindu axiology. A host of scattered references are brought together into an integrated structure. The result will be helpful to beginning students of Indian religion who have neither the time nor desire to wade through a multitude of separate journals in pursuit of a reasoned overview of what the Hindu *puruṣārthas* are all about. More advanced students will be not unappreciative of the fact that someone else has put together the pieces of the academic jigsaw in this field so that they can go on to create a more profound and beautiful mosaic.

Two final comments. It is disappointing that in the bibliography there are not full references to the exact details of the critical editions of the

Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa, and the designated edition of the ṚgVeda. A bare statement “ṚgVeda” is insufficient. An index would also have been useful even in such a short work. Finally an examination of the historical progression within the unfolding of Hindu attitudes to the *puruṣārthas* would have been helpful. Admittedly this is not a Hindu way of doing things, but Arvind Sharma has not confined himself to any one approach. Especially useful would have been more reference to the developing views within the Veda itself, particularly between the ṚgVeda and the Upaniṣads. However within its limits this slight essay is also a helpful essay.

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COLLINS, Steven, *Selfless persons, Imagery and thought in Theravāda Buddhism*—Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982, IX, 323 p. £ 22.50.

Buddhism has often been described as being based on a paradox, its aim being to teach a way to salvation for the individual which, however, according to the Buddhist concept of *anattā* (‘not-self’), has no real existence. Many theories have been proposed to resolve this problem which is, of course, inseparably related to the question of the correct understanding of the Buddhist *nirvāṇa*.

Dr. Collins presents his new contribution on this subject as an “essay in the history of ideas”. Beginning with an analysis of relevant aspects of pre-Buddhist Indian religion, he proceeds with a discussion of the doctrine of the ‘not-self’ as it is represented in the Pāli tradition, i.e. the scriptures handed down by Theravāda Buddhism. He also takes into account important aspects of the later development of Theravāda tradition. This enables him to make use not only of historic material, but also of modern and even contemporary interpretations of Buddhism. The book is well documented with textual references. The author presents his views not in the first place under a philological point of view, but rather from a philosophical angle, and he makes use of methods of other disciplines too, particularly of those of sociology and comparative religion. He rightly terms the Buddhist *nirvāṇa* “a religious ‘absolute’ independent of time and space”, and he stresses that the doctrine of Buddhism (as it was handed down, of course) describes the “soteriological project” of the way to *nirvāṇa* in terms of the available contemporary “conceptual tools of Indian culture”. It is only by

the introduction of the dichotomy between 'conventional' and 'ultimate' truth that the technical details of theoretical and personal analysis can be inserted into the more comprehensive ethical and psychological teachings of the Buddha. As a particularly important contribution to the understanding of Theravāda thought, the author's discussion of the concept of *bhavaṅga* in post-canonical Pāli literature may be mentioned. Here he shows how thinkers of later Theravāda Buddhism have further developed the conceptual framework inherited from the ancient tradition within the limits of Theravāda orthodoxy. With the interpretation of the social dichotomy between monk and layman in terms of the "eschatological picture of continuing life-in-*saṃsāra*" versus "the paradigmatic symbol of the transcendence of the karmic sphere, in *nirvāṇa*", an attempt is made to link the inner dynamics of the development of the Buddhist Sangha with the basic concept dealt with in this book.

In the rather long series of recent publications on Buddhism, this book may be described as one of the most remarkable contributions.

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SCHNEIDER, Ulrich, *Einführung in den Buddhismus*—Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1982, XII, 221 p., 2 plates, 2 maps.

This "introduction to Buddhism" forms part of a series of "introductions" to various fields of humanities which were written for the information of readers on the present state and on open problems of research in the field. Whereas, in most volumes of this series, generally accepted views are clearly separated from the particular author's personal theories, this has not been done in the present volume. The author deals not with Buddhism in its totality, but with early Indian Buddhism only, i.e. mainly with his view of "original Buddhism" and its development until the period of the formation of the so-called "sects" or "schools". A very short chapter on *Mahāyāna* (pp. 177-193) is added, but later developments are not discussed at all.

After a short introduction on the environment and on the history of Buddhology the author undertakes an analysis of some important early Buddhist sources with a particular philological methodology which he had developed. In a rather circumstantial way, certain general features of the early Buddhist tradition are evaluated and arguments for the separation of historical and legendary elements in the life story of the Buddha are proposed. In this way, it is attempted to explain the growth of the Buddha

legend. It is already in this section that the reader becomes aware that the aim of this "introduction" to Buddhism is quite different from an introduction in the sense explained above. The author who has based his work on a manuscript for lectures (see p. XII) uses the example of certain texts of early Buddhist tradition—here mainly the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*—to explain his own philological method of textual analysis to his students. This method is characterized by a kind of fragmentization of the tradition which, in my opinion, is not really convincing for texts of this kind. The methodology follows the lines which were originally developed by the author's academical teacher, the late Prof. Friedrich Weller (1889-1980). For the biography of the Buddha, the results largely agree with long established generally accepted views, e.g. the historicity of the last journey of the Buddha (p. 36), which is now again argued for in a detailed manner.

Schneider's analysis of the Buddha's teaching is again introduced by a survey of pre-Buddhist and contemporary thought. Whoever reads his description of the Buddha's teaching must get the impression that much of the Buddha's teaching consists of commonplaces and banalities (cf., e.g., pp. 76 ff.). On the other-hand, well-known and simple facts e.g. the meaning of "suffering" (*duḥkha*), are explained with many details. The author criticizes the Buddha's teachings in a rather negative way, e.g. as showing a "want of deepness" (p. 111 etc.). He basically interprets Buddhism not mainly as a religion, but only as a philosophy. It was, however, already Frauwallner who has clearly stated that the Buddha has used philosophical arguments only in so far as this was essential for his explanation of the *dharma* to the world, but that an interpretation of his *dharma* from the purely philosophical point of view would be a basic misunderstanding of his purpose. Only by viewing Buddhism from the right angle we realize that Buddhist thought on the way to liberation is "much deeper" than that of other doctrines (E. Frauwallner, *Geschichte der indischen Philosophie*, vol. 1, Salzburg 1953, p. 240). Though Schneider often quotes Frauwallner, he seems to have missed this essential point and thus he starts to argue with the Buddhist teachings from the point of view of logic formalities which have no relevance at all in this context.

The volume also contains short chapters on the Sangha and the Buddhist laity, on the Buddhist councils, Buddhism under Aśoka, the history of the *Tripitaka* and the early "sects". Many of these questions have not yet been finally answered but it would lead too far to enter into a detailed discussion here. In a concluding chapter on Mahāyāna an attempt is made to formulate the idea of *śūnyatā* in five theorems ("Merksätze") which are not verifiable in the sources in this form, but remain rather personal views of the author, and which may be commented upon in a similar

way as the logic formalities used for his attempt to understand the essentials of the Buddha's teachings.

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*Fires of Love, Waters of Peace: Passion and Renunciation in Indian Culture*, by Lee Siegel—Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1983, pp. 122, \$12.50.

Lee Siegel describes his book as a "reverie before fire and water, an attempt to follow fire and water as symbols of antipodal experiences: love and peace, passion and renunciation." (p. ix) Siegel weaves the opposing themes of sensual pleasure (passion, attachment, sexuality) and worldly renunciation (emotional equanimity, detachment, and sexual restraint) around the images provided by the love poetry of Amaru and the philosophy of Śaṅkara. Using Amaru and Śaṅkara not as historical personages but as exemplars of opposing literary traditions, Siegel unfolds the complementariness of the two traditions. While Amaru (date unknown) is considered the sensual aristocrat whose poetry celebrates the "delicate illusions" of erotic love, Śaṅkara (8th century A.D.) is viewed as the saintly ascetic whose "non-dual" (*Advaita*) teachings shatter the earth's gross delusions of permanence.

According to legend, the poems attributed to Amaru, called the *Amaruśataka*, were written by Śaṅkara while he inhabited the body of Amaru. Śaṅkara, an ascetic sage who preached renunciation, felt that true knowledge must include all aspects of life. Hence he used his mystic powers to abandon his ascetic body and enter the recently expired body of King Amaru. Once joined to the dead King's body, Śaṅkara returned to the palace and enjoyed the many wives of Amaru without defiling his own ascetic vows. The poetry of Amaru reflects this union of passionate King and renounced sage. "While the poems in the Amaru collection celebrate the joys and wonders of love in all its phases, beneath the delight one senses a touch, however slight and hidden, of fear and profound sadness." (p. 9).

The chapters of Siegel's book mirror both the stages of courtship and the initiation and completion of the ascetic's quest. The first chapter, called "Invocations," sets out the apparent contradiction of the goals of the lover engrossed in sensual delights and of the sage bent on ending all attachments to the world. The chapter ends affirming the legend's image that lover and ascetic converge in their singlemindedness toward union where ego is lost. Chapter two, "Beginnings," unfolds the elements of

budding love and the link of disciple with his guru. The third chapter, "Journeys," depicts the vicissitudes of the relationship of love (especially separation of lovers) as well as the painful departure of the son (Śaṅkara) from his mother's side to enter the arduous path of the ascetic. The fourth chapter, "Confrontations," casts the images of various conflicts (Vishnu and Shiva, lovers who quarrel, male inconstancy and female faithfulness) on the screen of Māyā ("illusion") to show how "Separation exists for the sake of union." (p. 84) The fifth chapter, "Unions," completes the imagery of love and renunciation by comparing the transitory union of sexual intimacy with the eternal freedom of the union of conditioned soul (Ātman) with its unconditioned counterpart (Brahman). And just as of the three types of sexual union that of conciliatory union after a quarrel is the most pleasurable, so too spiritual union is most complete after renunciation. "The silence of love and the silence of renunciation are utterly different and yet they sound exactly the same." (p. 101)

A concluding epilogue called "Dissolutions" puts the whole study in the framework of Śaṅkara's philosophy. Siegel concludes, "Nothing outlasts the death of fire and water. Despite passion or wisdom, love or renunciation, all will be absorbed into oblivion." (p. 109) And it is precisely this perspective that makes the whole book a reverie on love and renunciation. While the fire of passion and the cooling waters of renunciation appear to have contradictory aims and functions in human lives, both are finally aspects of the same process of illusion (*māyā*). And this is what makes both journeys, that of the lover and that of the ascetic, metaphors of the same quest for union.

Siegel's book reads like poetry in many places and can be best appreciated after more than one reading. I agree with him that it is not a book for the specialist who is looking for a balanced treatment of the Indian views on sexuality and renunciation. (p. xi) Siegel recognizes that Śaṅkara's perspective is an elite one which is aloof from the commoner in India who has several solutions to the conflict of passion and renunciation from which to choose. (p. 48) Among the choices that are popular in India, that of the Krishna bhaktis is notable. In scriptures such as the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and the Gītā Govinda and the theologies of the Gauḍīya (Bengali) followers of Caitanya, erotic imagery is used to impell the devotee *into* the world as a lover of Krishna. Allegorical interpretations of the moods and circumstances of lovers reveal the soul's attraction for, sense of separation from, and final union with the Lord Krishna (see Barbara Stoller Miller's *Love Song of the Dark Lord*, Columbia, 1977). This resolution permits distinctions between self and Lord and does not end in absorption or dissolution but in fellowship with God. Yet another solution

is that offered by the tantric yogins who use sexual energies to activate spiritual ones. Here sexual intercourse (*maithuna*) is ritualized to the extent that the spiritual union can be brought about by the physical one.

Reading Siegel's book one comes to feel that Śaṅkara's is not just one among many Indian solutions to the riddle of life (passion versus renunciation), but THE solution. This feeling is increased with his description of the gender distinctions in which women are earthy, attached, and passionate, and men are transcendent, renounced, and detached from life. "Ultimately it was the man's duty to leave and the woman's duty to grieve. His religious fulfillment was in renunciation, hers in devotion." (p. 36) But in belief and practice most men along with women in India have chosen the path of devotion and few are those who lead the ideal life of the ascetic (*sannyāsin*). Furthermore, gender roles are much more ambiguous than Siegel allows even in the ideal in India (see Wendy O'Flaherty's *Women, Androgynes, and Other Mythical Beasts*, Chicago, 1980).

To read Siegel's account of the opposing yet merging themes of passion and renunciation is to read a delightful and well written apology of Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta (non-dualistic) view. This comment should not be viewed as a deprecation of this book, rather as a qualification to its usefulness. The beginning student of religion will learn much in this book about passion and renunciation (and the poetry of Amaru) from Śaṅkara's point of view but not from other classical (and in some cases more widespread) standpoints. Furthermore, Siegel's presentation seduces the reader into believing that this view of women, men, lovers, ascetics, etc. is normative for India. Yet precisely because Siegel captures so well the Amaru/Śaṅkara blend of insights, his study is enjoyable and informative at the same time.

Siegel's translations of Amaru's poetry are imaginative and yet faithful to the original Sanskrit (his explanatory footnotes are especially helpful here). With the qualifications noted above, I recommend this book highly as a delightful way to begin to comprehend both the erotic poetic genre of India as well as the religious perspective of Śaṅkara. Both are revealed in this important study of the poetry of Amaru.

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## IUDAICA MYSTICA ET NON-MYSTICA

CHERNUS, Ira, *Mysticism in Rabbinic Judaism: Studies in the History of the Midrash*—Berlin-New York, Walter de Gruyter, 1982, hardcover, pp. 162. ISBN 3-11-008589-5.

ZOHAR Le, traduction, annotation et avant propos par Charles Mopsik, suivi du *Midrash ha Néélam*, traduit et commenté par Bernard Maruani. Tome i—Paris, Verdier Collection “Les Dix Paroles”, 1981, softcover, pp. 670.

GOETSCHEL, Roland, *Meir ibn Gabbay: Le Discours de la Kabbale Espagnole*—Leuven, Peeters, softcover, 1981, pp. 565, Belg. Frs. 1860.

LAZAROFF, Allan, *The Theology of Abraham Bibago*—Alabama, Univ. of Alabama Press, 1981, hardcover, pp. 139.

The unity of Chernus's essays consists in the detailed examination of selected midrashic material with a view to studying the relationship between the so-called “Merkabah Mysticism” and rabbinic Judaism. Whilst Scholem assumed a very early date for Merkabah mysticism (which he also called “Jewish Gnosticism”), and also held that it was practised not by marginal sectarians but by the central rabbinic, tannaitic and amoraic authorities, others have had second thoughts. At a pinch the question of “gnosticism” can be evaded by considering it a matter of semantics only (though not everybody would agree to this cavalier procedure), but the problem of *ma'asey merkabah* (what exactly was it? an esoteric teaching?—and what by the way was the relationship of “esotericism” and “exotericism”?—a discipline? a practice?) and its role in the rabbinic Judaism of the leading tannaitic and amoraic teachers is a substantive one.

The author concentrates on midrashic material dealing with the revelation at Mount Sinai and with the rewards of the soul after death. An additional dimension is introduced by the aggadic motif of the departure of the soul from those who witnessed the sinaitic revelation, to be followed by a kind of miraculous resurrection (i.e. “initiatory death”)—a motif which the author takes as a starting point for some interesting reflections. Whilst this study does not pretend to lead to definitive conclusions, it certainly enriches and advances the debate.

The *Zohar* (end of 13th cent.) is undoubtedly the *magnum opus* and apogee of the classical Spanish Kabbalah. Because of its massive, mythical

and near-gnostic symbolism, the mystical and theosophical doctrines of this kabbalistic Bible are not easily understood and “deciphered”. In the nature of things, translations from the *Zohar*’s pseudo-Aramaic (the term means that the author did not write in an Aramaic environment or literary tradition, but like every Jewish scholar possessed a passive knowledge of Aramaic from the reading of traditional rabbinic and targumic sources; from this knowledge his fertile mind created its own “Aramaic”) do not necessarily facilitate an understanding of the text. Passages from the *Zohar* are available in I. Tishby’s impeccably scholarly annotated Hebrew anthology (*Mishnah ha-Zohar*, 2 vols.), and a reasonably good, though incomplete, English translation (by H. Sperling and M. Simon, London, 1931-4, 1949) is also available. But France still had a debt to pay, because the first translation of the *Zohar* ever to appear was the French version published at the beginning of this century by an apostate Jew writing under the name of Jean de Pauly. This “translation” is in fact one of the great scandals in the history of scholarship, since the French text is compounded of brazen ignorance and unabashed forgeries. Yet it also testifies to the intelligence of Monsieur de Pauly and to the correctness of his evaluation of kabbalistic scholarship at his time: he evidently knew exactly that he could get away with impunity with even the most outrageous fabrications and nonsense. A scholarly French translation of the *Zohar* was therefore a debt of honour, and there is no gainsaying that Messrs. Mopsik and Maruani are abreast of the results and methods of modern scholarship. The trouble, however, is that these results and methods do not seem to be a major concern of their own method of meaningful and pneumatic interpretation. After reading in the introduction (pp. 12-13) that the language of the *Zohar* is not artificial because the book “inaugure une nouvelle langue à partir de l’ancienne ... [il] n’imite pas non plus une langue araméenne du Talmud et du Midrach, il lui donne un nouvel accent en continue dans son style propre d’énonciation”, and that the question of [medieval] authorship is irrelevant because the ascription to R. Simon bar Yohai merely serves “pour ménager dans l’anonymat du livre, en respectant cet anonymat ... le nom même de la tradition [Kabbalah] ...”, then we have learned a new approach to the problem of pseudepigraphy and no surprise can come any more as a surprise. So why quibble if *raqi’a* (the “firmament” of biblical and post-biblical Hebrew) is rendered as “space”? Clearly the authors of the new translation are deeply convinced of the continuing meaningfulness and relevance of the *Zohar* and intend to convey its message (or what they consider as such) to their contemporaries. One example may suffice to illustrate the difference between mere scholarship and French poetry (*Zohar* I 15a):

C. Mopsik

D'emblée, la résolution du Roi laissa la trace de son retrait dans la transparence suprême. Une flamme obscure jaillit du frémissement de l'Infini, dans l'enfermement de son enfermement ... Enfermement dans l'Enfermement, frémissement de l'Infini, la source perce et ne perce pas l'air qui l'environne et elle demeure inconnaissable. Jusqu'à ce que, par l'insistance de sa percée, elle mette en lumière un point ténu, enfermement suprême. Par delà de ce point, c'est l'inconnu.

G. Scholem

When the will of the King began to take effect, he engraved signs into the heavenly sphere [that surrounded him]. Within the most hidden recess a dark flame issued from the mystery of *eyn sof* ... From the innermost centre of the flame sprang forth a well ... [which] broke through and yet did not break through the ether. It could not be recognised at all until a hidden, supernal point shone forth under the impact of the final breaking through. Beyond this point nothing can be known.

The first 663 pp. i.e., vol. i, take us up to *Zohar* i, 26b. So there are still many more volumes in store for the reader who is edified by this evocative and "spiritual" *genre littéraire*.

Until the expulsion of the Jews from the Iberian peninsula (end of the 15th cent.), the Kabbalah remained the relatively esoteric province of a mystico-theosophical minority (to avoid saying élite). The 16th cent. saw a renewal of kabbalistic ferment and activity which culminated in the great Safed revival. One of the most important and systematic kabbalists in the post-expulsion but pre-Safed period was Meir ibn Gabbay (1480-ca. 1540) and he certainly deserved a full-length monographic study. This has now been provided by R. Goetschel with all the scholarly competence and *akribia* characteristic of the "Paris School" i.e., the disciples of the late Georges Vajda. Perhaps less than 565 pages would also have done justice to the subject, but—as is well-known—the fear and even the mere concept of "overwriting" are unknown in French scholarship. The study paints in broad but also very detailed strokes the historical background of the "twilight of Spanish Jewry", the development of the Kabbalah as well as of other spiritual and intellectual currents up to that period, and ibn Gabbay's own teaching. Ibn Gabbay's major work being his *Holy Service* [of God] i.e., the interpretation of the religious life (fulfilment of the commandments, prayer, strict observance of the Law etc.) in the light of the kabbalistic understanding of the nature and destiny of man, pt. 3 (pp. 205 ff.) is undoubtedly the most interesting. It also brings out with the utmost clarity one of the most surprising—not to say audacious and near-heretical—doctrines of the Kabbalah, to wit that when man serves God he not only accumulates merits or contributes to his own salvation, but actually contributes to the salvation viz. perfection of God. Faint—or not so faint—echoes of the idea of *salvator salvandus*! The performance of the

commandments is not just for the sake of man (as traditional orthodoxy would have it) but also for the sake of God. Ibn Gabbay's trenchant formulation of this doctrine is taken over verbatim, as the author correctly insists, from the great 13th cent. pre-Zoharic Spanish kabbalist and talmudist Nahmanides. A final chapter, followed by a full bibliography and indices, reviews the influence and after-life of ibn Gabbay in later kabbalism. A monograph of the highest quality.

The 15th and 16th cent. kabbalists had hard words to say about the rationalist philosophers whom they also held responsible for the decline of Spanish Jewry and its final débacle. The philosophers considered themselves the heirs of the great Maimonides and despised the Kabbalah. One of the addressees of ibn Gabbay's anti-philosophical polemic was Abraham Bibago (d. ca. 1489) to whose major theological treatise, dealing with the doctrine of the Divine Will, Knowledge and Providence, Mr. Lazaroff's short but solid Ph.D. thesis (49 pp. plus over 50 pages of notes) is devoted. Bibago knew, and refers to, the classical texts of the kabbalists but the important references for him are to al-Farabi, al-Ghazzali and Ibn Sina. His hero, next to Maimonides, is Averroes. Whilst ibn Gabbay represents the 16th cent. resurgence of Kabbalah, Bibago represents the last revival of Spanish-Jewish Aristotelianism before the great expulsion. It was a time when an eminent rabbinic leader and authority could write a commentary on Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, espouse Averroism, and reject the Kabbalah. Lazaroff's monograph is not only a study of Bibago but also a contribution to our knowledge of the background against which the relationship of philosophy and Kabbalah in the 15th and 16th centuries has to be viewed.

RJZW

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## CHRONICLE AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### The Princeton Conference on Maitreya Studies

The Princeton Conference on Maitreya Studies was held at Princeton University on May 1-3, 1983. Sponsored by the Department of Religion and the Program in East Asian Studies, the Conference was funded in part by a grant from the Division of Research Programs, National Endowment for the Humanities and was co-directed by Helen Hardacre and Alan Sponberg.

Drawing upon scholars in various disciplines, representing specialists in the major cultural areas of Buddhist influence, the purpose of the Conference was to clarify the significance of Maitreya in Buddhist history, thought and culture. Specifically, the Conference addressed the following questions: What forms does the cult of Maitreya take in various Asian societies? What iconographic and ritual symbols are associated with Maitreya? What expectations do believers have of Maitreya? Under what circumstances does the Maitreya cult develop millenarian tendencies?

Since papers were distributed in advance, Conference discussions were devoted to issues raised by each author. The following is a listing of papers presented at each of the four panels.

#### *First Panel: Overview*

Discussion of J. M. Kitagawa, "The Many Faces of Maitreya"  
Moderators: H. Hardacre and A. Sponberg (Princeton University)

#### *Second Panel: South and Southeast Asia*

Moderator: John Holt (Bowdoin College)  
J. Barbaro, "A Typology of Maitreya Beliefs"  
P. Jaini (University of California), "Stages in the Bodhisattva Career of the Tathāgata Maitreya"  
M. Nagatomi (Harvard University), "Maitreya in Terms of Buddha Lineage"  
S. Tambiah (Harvard University), "Maitreya in Southeast Asia"

#### *Third Panel: China, Korea, and Viet-nam*

Moderators: Yu Chun-fang (Rutgers University) and Miriam Levering (University of Tennessee)  
M. Strickman (University of California), "Heralds of Maitreya"

- R. Thorp (Princeton University), "Maitreya in the Early Cave-chapels at Tun-huang"
- A. Sponberg (Princeton University), "Maitreya Cult Practice in China and Korea: Wŏnhyo on Visualization"
- L. Lancaster (University of California), "The Maitreya Tradition in Korea"
- D. Overmyer (University of British Columbia), "Attitudes Towards the Ruler and State in Chinese Popular Religious Literature"
- H.-T. Tai (Harvard University), "Maitreya in Viet-nam"

*Fourth Panel: Japan*

- Moderator: J. M. Kitagawa (University of Chicago)
- N. Miyata (Tsukuba University, Japan), "Various Types of Maitreya Belief in Japan"
- C. Kanda (Princeton University), "The Pensive Prince of Chūgū-ji"
- K. Brock (Princeton University), "The Kasagi Maitreya in the Thirteenth Century"
- M. Collcutt (Princeton University), "Millenarianism in the Meiji Restoration"
- H. Hardacre (Princeton University), "Maitreya and Modern Japan"

Among the issues discussed by Conference participants, the following were central: the relation between the notions of *cakravartin* and future Buddha; the association of Maitreya both with the latter days of the Dharma and with the "good eon," the *bhadra-kalpa*; the relative importance within Buddhism as a whole of Maitreya and Ambitābha; the relative importance to the scholar of texts and cultic practices regarding Maitreya; the question of millenarianism as it relates to Maitreya.

Each of the issues above provided valuable stimulus towards a general clarification of the significance of Maitreya, but it was the last point that attracted perhaps the most attention. Discussion revealed that most participants had assumed that Maitreya's status within Buddhism as a whole derives most importantly from the motif of his descent from the Tusita Heaven to this world in the latter days, here to inaugurate a reign of righteousness. Although many of us had tended to think of Maitreya as a savior, a messiah, we found instead that both textually and cultically this motif is much less important than that of Maitreya as ruler of an ideal world, variously conceived. In fact, only rarely is Maitreya (or persons assuming his identity) held to be directly instrumental in the creation of that world or in the disposition of the preceding era. Instead, he presides over an ideal realm and sums up in himself the oppositions and contradic-

tions resolved and harmonized by his rule. His "millenium" is seldom conceived of along the lines of a revolution, and accordingly, participants were reminded of the importance of exercising caution and precise definition when applying such terms as "millenarian" to Maitreya.

Plans for publication of revised Conference papers are under way. Conference directors Hardacre and Sponberg hope to prepare a completed manuscript within the year.

Dept. of Religion,  
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Helen HARDACRE

*Religious iconography*

A very successful workshop on religious iconography was realised by the homonymous institute of the State University, Groningen, April 10-13, 1984. The sessions dealt with approaches to religious iconography, Asia, ancient Near East, ancient mediterranean cultures, and non-literate cultures respectively. Papers were presented by Prof. Babcock (Tucson), Prof. Barasch (Jerusalem), Prof. Calmeyer (Berlin), Prof. Cancik (Tübingen), Dr. Entwistle (Groningen), Prof. Gladigow (Tübingen), Prof. Heerma van Voss (Amsterdam), Dr. Hoffmann (Hamburg), Dr. Hoffmann-Curtius (Tübingen), Prof. Keel (Freiburg), Prof. Kippenberg (Director of the institute), Dr. van Kooij (Utrecht), Prof. Mato (Calgary), Prof. Metzler (Münster), Prof. Muensterberger (London), Dr. Neumann (Berlin), Dr. Neumer-Pfau (Hamburg), Prof. von Stietencron (Tübingen), Prof. te Velde (Groningen), Prof. Versnel (Leiden), and Dr. Witte (Groningen).

Prof. Berndt (Perth) and Prof. Kamstra (Amsterdam), both prevented from attending, sent in their papers. Other participants were Prof. van Baaren (Groningen), Dr. van den Bosch (Groningen), Prof. Burgos (Chambéry), Prof. Drijvers (Groningen), Dr. Fazzini (Brooklyn), and Prof. Leertouwer (Leiden). The papers will be published in the institute's annual *Visible Religion* IV.

M. HEERMA VAN VOSS

The summer of 1983 exhibited the usual conference activity characteristic of most summers. (For the spring of 1983 cf. NUMEN XXX, 1983, pp. 286-287) In late August and early September the anthropologists (and who would underrate the importance of

anthropology for the study of religions?) met in Vancouver, Canada; and the sociologists of religion met in London. The major event, however, was the CISHAAN (formerly The Orientalist) Congress, which was held in Tokyo and Kyoto along the lines of the programme outlined in the advance notice in NUMEN XXX, 1983, p. 127. A superbly organised event of great interest and high quality.

The Institute of Philosophy at the University of Rome, now named after the late and much regretted Enrico Castelli, held a Colloquium (3-7 January, 1984) on "Judaism, Hellenism and Christianity". Historians of religion noted with satisfaction that even the philosophical emphasis took due note of historical sequences. After all, Judaism existed before "Hellenism" arose, and Christianity originated and developed in an environment that was both Jewish and hellenistic.

The Danish Association for the History of Religions postponed its inaugural colloquium (cf. NUMEN XXX, 1983, p. 128) to August 1984.

#### *The XVth International Congress for the History of Religions*

Member-groups of the IAHR will receive before long the first circulars concerning the next (the XVth) International Congress, which will take place in Sydney (Australia), 17-23 August, 1985. August 17-19 are for arrival and registration (participants should allow for recovery from jet-lag). The official opening will take place on Sunday evening, 18 August, and the Actual work of the Congress (plenaries and section meetings) during August 19-22. The General Assembly of the I.A.H.R. and the Closing Session will be held on Friday morning, August 23. Circulars and other relevant information given out by the Australian Organising Committee will also be published in NUMEN (see below). The general theme of the Congress is "Religion and Identity".

R. J. Z. WERBLOWSKY

ANNOUNCEMENT

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

*XVth International Congress*

University of Sydney, Australia

August 18-23 1985

The theme of the XVth International Congress of the IAHR will be RELIGION AND IDENTITY. There will be the customary keynote addresses (by invitation only), 40-45 minute papers and 20 minute research reports. The Congress will be divided into the usual regional and methodological sections, with the addition of sections covering Australia and the Pacific. Details of all sections will be available early in 1984.

Those wishing to present papers are urged as far as possible to keep within the Congress theme, which is intended to emphasize the role of religion in forming and maintaining individual and group (national, ethnic, sectional, tribal, family) identity.

Papers on unrelated subjects will not however be excluded.

For registration details and information, please contact:

IAHR Congress Secretariat,  
Department of Religious Studies,  
The University of Sydney,  
Sydney, NSW 2006,  
Australia.

Eric J. Sharpe,  
Congress Chairman

Peter D. Masfield,  
Organizing Secretary

## TAOIST MESSIANISM\*

ANNA SEIDEL

The longing for paradise on earth and for the savior, the messiah, who promises to lead us to it, is one of those most elementary hopes which lie deeply hidden in man. The powerful emotional energy of these yearnings is, in a normal society, tamed and channeled by rationality and common sense. It is only in times of crisis and bewildering change, when ordinary behavior patterns are disrupted, that these yearnings can come to the surface, often with explosive force, and sweep away whole societies into irrational phantasies and inspire radical and often violent solutions to the problems at hand. When normal ways of coping with crisis have failed, the search for renewal continues on a religious and emotional plane: the messiah appears bringing his good tidings of an imminent earthly paradise.

Since Norman Cohn's important work on medieval European messianism, *The Pursuit of the Millenium* (1957), the study of messianic movements in all cultures has become almost a fashion. It was discovered that such movements do not depend on a Jewish or Christian tradition of prophecy or on a medieval world view. During the last 100 years, politico-religious movements that can be called messianic, have appeared in Europe, in Africa, in America, in Japan, in Melanesia and Indonesia. Their most striking common feature is, as Carmen Blacker has pointed out, that "the conditions under which they have appeared ... are always those of the rapid change, invalidated tradition and mass insecurity which also gave rise to the chiliastic movements of the middle ages". In recent times messiahs have appeared most prominently in "societies whose traditional way of life has been disrupted by the intrusion of Western culture".<sup>1</sup>

Carmen Blacker has studied the active and positive millenarianism of the new religions in Japan, which help their believers toward a smooth and happy adjustment to their radically changed modern society. Marjorie Topley has investigated several new Chinese

religions in Singapore and Hongkong, movements which see the tribulations of this past century as the prophesied catastrophies arising at the end of well-defined time cycles and prompting the divine Tao to manifest new revelations for the salvation of the chosen believer.<sup>2</sup>

These new Chinese religions are not only one ripple in the worldwide tide of messianism of the 19th and 20th centuries, but they are first of all a late and faint echo of indigenous messianic traditions that have existed in China ever since the first great millenarist movement, the "Way of Great Peace" (*T'ai-p'ing Tao*) in the second century A. D. These beginnings and the indigenous Chinese and specifically Taoist nostalgia for the reign of "Great Peace" are the subject of this paper. I will focus first on the origin of the *T'ai-p'ing* concept and then limit myself to the four centuries between the fall of the Han Dynasty at the end of the 2nd century A. D. and the reunification of China under the T'ang Empire in 618 A.D.

This chronological delimitation from the fall of the first great unified empire to the establishment of the next, is not an arbitrary one, because in the intervening 400 years of political division, social unrest and cultural fermentation it was precisely the messianic dream of *T'ai-p'ing* that kept the vision of a unified Chinese Empire alive and contributed significantly to its reestablishment under the T'ang. Again and again, throughout the period of disunion, the messianic prophecy: "The Han will rise again!" resounded as the battlecry of the rebels; many an emperor was flattered with the title Lord of *T'ai-p'ing*, successor to the Han; and when the founders of the T'ang Dynasty consciously posed as the fulfillment of the specific popular expectations of the savior king, they were acting in an age-old pattern.

The roots of the specifically Chinese ideas concerning the messianic ruler lie, as is well known, in the very center of the orthodox Confucian or rather pan-Chinese tradition of political thought. In the earliest Confucian literature, long before even the Han Empire, the ruler (*wang*) had been endowed with a very special mission. The *Analects of Confucius* contain, as Arthur Waley has pointed out, the nostalgia for a "Saviour King who, unlike the monarchs of the world around us, rules by *te*, by magico-moral force alone. The

coming of such a Saviour was looked forward to with Messianic fervour. Were a True King to come, says Confucius, in the space of a single generation Goodness would become universal.”<sup>3</sup>

Thinkers of all schools<sup>4</sup> agreed on the nature of the perfect empire such a True King would create. The Confucian *Great Learning* states that once his kingdom is well governed, the prince shall see the whole world in peace. Chuang-tzu calls a government conforming to the order of nature “t’ai-p’ing”. Hsün-tzu says that a society is perfectly balanced (p’ing) when each individual has the place which suits him and fulfills his task according to his capacities. The *Spring and Autumn Annals of Master Lü* tells us that the state of T’ai-p’ing had reigned in high antiquity, thanks to the music of the ancient kings.<sup>5</sup>

During the Han period, the concept of T’ai-p’ing became very common. The eminent Han Confucian Tung Chung-shu described the cosmic harmony of T’ai-p’ing as the time when “winds are never stormy, they only open the seed pods of plants and scatter the seeds. Rain does not ravage the soil but only moistens the leaves and soaks down to the roots. Thunder terrifies no one but only commands and calls to action. Lightning does not blind but radiates and illuminates with clarity... Snow does not block the mountains but only covers the harmful and dilutes poisons...”<sup>6</sup> Here we see that Great Peace is not limited to human society, it extends to nature and in common speech “t’ai-p’ing” even came to mean simply “plentiful harvest”. Thus we read in the *Discussions on Salt and Iron* (*Yen-t’ieh lun* 36) that in the ancient times of the Duke of Chou, when the world knew T’ai-p’ing, there were no premature deaths, no bad harvests, the climate was so friendly that the rain did not break the clods of earth and the wind did not whistle in the branches.<sup>7</sup> Wang Ch’ung goes as far as to uphold the thesis that T’ai-p’ing had been realized by several Han emperors, especially the Taoist Emperor Wen and the founder of the Second Han Dynasty, Kuang-wu ti.<sup>8</sup>

These early formulations of the state of Great Peace differ from Western notions about the messianic age insofar as they do not imply any total break, any total discontinuity with the relative conditions of the present. The perfect state that had existed in the past was a state of cosmic harmony in which all the concentric spheres of

the organic Chinese universe, nature as well as human society, were perfectly attuned and communicated in a balanced rhythm of timeliness which brings maximum fulfillment to each living being. The recreation of this state hinges on the figure of the sagely ruler, as Tung Chung-shu explains: "When a Sage (*sheng*) rules, then Yin and Yang are in harmony and wind and rain arrive in their due season".<sup>9</sup> In Tung Chung-shu's mind, the Sage was Confucius, the great teacher of statecraft who, in Tung's time, at the beginning of the Han Dynasty, had been elevated to the role of Preceptor of all Chinese emperors.

Thus T'ai-p'ing was basically the Confucian ideal of social harmony. However, by the end of the Han Dynasty, this official ideal of the Han establishment had become discredited by the mismanagement of the dynasty that subscribed to it and the ideal of Great Peace was taken up by popular movements inspired by Taoism. This shift did not come as a total break with the Confucian tradition since the Confucians themselves have wisely limited the power of the monarch by elaborating the ancient idea that the ruler needs the Mandate of Heaven and that this supreme deity Heaven can withdraw the Mandate from a corrupt and repressive autocrat and ordain rebellious forces to inflict divine punishment on him and his clan. Natural cataclysms like inundations and bad harvest, earthquakes, strange portents appearing in the sky, social chaos, revolts and epidemics are so many signs that Heaven has abandoned the ruler. In such a time of crisis, in the year 5 B.C., the Han Emperor Ai had adopted the title "August Emperor of Great Peace" in order to reinforce his claim to Heaven's approval and to the task of creating Great Peace. Therefore, when 150 years later, peasant rebels started to assume the very same title of "August Emperor" and a militant mass movement wrote the slogan of Great Peace on its banners, the authority of the reigning house of Han was challenged in a deeply religious and emotional sense: Heaven had withdrawn its Mandate from the Han and bestowed it elsewhere, that is, on the Taoist rebels.

Was Taoism then an alternative ideology espoused by people hostile to the Confucian teachings? This was not really so. Taoist mysticism had always been rather complementary and congenial to Confucian rationality. The difference was not so much between the

two systems of thought, but it was social. Not Taoist philosophy but a popular Taoist religion became the alternative, not to the Confucian teachings but to the literati regime that subscribed to it. As Joseph Levenson has put it: "Civil wars in China were never at bottom religious wars, with Taoists trying to smash Confucianism out of religious hostility to doctrine. Rather, peasants rose in revolt because of social pressures, when the ideal Confucian social harmony was too outrageously a fiction; and the popular religious Taoism became a sign ... of a peasant avowal of alienation from the ruling order which was officially Confucian. A well-fed official might write a philosophically Taoist poem, as relief from the Confucian cares of office. But a starving peasant might invoke the Taoist deities, and set out to kill the Confucian official."<sup>10</sup>

This social hostility was of a rebellious and not a revolutionary type. The Taoists strove basically for the same political ideal the Confucians professed, that is, the enlightened rule of a Heaven-ordained Emperor who would recreate T'ai-p'ing. Who were these politically active Taoists, these rebels who claimed divine guidance from a deified Sage Lao-tzu, who worshipped a revealed scripture called the *Canon of Great Peace* and recited the *Tao-te ching* as their sacred bible and catechism? The answer to this question involves the whole problem of the redefinition of the Taoist tradition. The classic view of Taoism as the intuitive nature mysticism of individualist recluses "later corrupted by popular superstitions and magic", has long obscured our understanding of the beginnings and of the basic character of the Taoist religion in the Han Dynasty. This misconception is all the more inexcusable since the name of the Taoist movement itself alerts us to its true character: in Han time sources Taoism is called the "Teachings of Huang-Lao", that is, of the Yellow Emperor and Lao-tzu. The Yellow Emperor was the most prominent of the mythical emperors of antiquity who had succeeded in creating Great Peace in his time. And in the view of the Taoist Huang-Lao School he had done so by following a Taoist art of government, the art of ruling by non-intervention (*wu-wei*) advocated in the *Tao-te ching*. Lao-tzu's famous work on the Tao and its Power (*te*) was indeed, in this Huang-Lao movement, a manual of government addressed to the ruler. Lao-tzu himself was seen first of all as the ideal Teacher of Emperors, the Sage who does

not act himself but influences his surroundings by the radiation of his virtue (*te*) and puts the world in order through his instrument, the ruler. In the relationship between Huang and Lao, between Emperor and Sage, the ruler seems to stand above his advising Sage, but in reality he is but the puppet moved by invisible hands or like the shaman infused by divine inspiration. Thus, Huang-Lao, Emperor and Sage, are an inseparable, complementary pair, a perfect metaphor of the ineffable Tao and its manifest efficacy called *te*.

When Confucianism became state doctrine in the early Han Dynasty, it was this school of Huang-Lao that was ousted from the imperial court and started to propagate its politico-religious teachings among the people. 300 years later, when the official Confucian dispensation shared the doom of the Han Dynasty and had lost the trust of the people, the Huang-Lao doctrine reappears in the sources as the creed of the T'ai-p'ing rebel leaders who proclaimed the advent of a messianic empire of the "Yellow Heaven of Great Peace". The Sage Lao-tzu reappears as Lord Huang-lao, a high celestial deity of this new religion, a manifestation of the Tao. Since the beginning of time, it was now believed, this manifestation of the Tao had descended into this world to reveal the true art of government to the Sage-kings of old. It was in this capacity of the deified Teacher of Emperors that Lao-tzu was worshipped even at the imperial court in 166 A.D. by a desperate emperor who was faced with the mounting flood of rebel movements banding together in threatening force and launching sporadic attacks that put the Han armies to their first test.<sup>11</sup>

The T'ai-p'ing rebellion broke out in force in 184 A.D. and in the ensuing decades of civil war the Han Dynasty fell, the rebellion was defeated and the generals of the defunct Han armies founded the several small dynasties that initiated the period of disunion that was to last 400 years. However, the T'ai-p'ing movement was only one branch of the new Taoist religion. In far-away Szechwan province in the West of China, another variation of the Huang-lao creed grew, at the same time, into a movement which did not expect salvation from a new messianic emperor but guidance by the divine Sage Lao-tzu himself. We know about this movement through a document from the Tun-huang caves which tells the story of five

manifestations of the god dated from 132 to 155 A.D. and records the sermons he addressed to his followers. There Lao tzu claims to have himself launched the Han Dynasty and to have redescended now because

“the people are in deep distress,  
epidemics and famine are everywhere.  
(In order to) turn your destiny,  
I will shake the Han regime ...  
I have manifested myself many times in order to save (mankind),  
(following) the junctures of time I have transformed myself.  
Few are those who understand me,  
numerous those who disbelieve.”<sup>12</sup>

This Tun-huang manuscript is the only trace of a small popular sect which was probably soon suppressed by the more important Taoist movement of the Celestial Master who succeeded in establishing an autonomous theocratic state in the same region of Cheng-tu in Szechwan. Under the title of “Most High Lord Lao” the same Sage Lao tzu was the supreme deity also of this new popular religion. However, the Celestial Master and his successors who reigned in Szechwan did not see themselves as messianic emperors nor as manifestations of the divine Sage on a terrestrial throne; they were priests of an entirely new dispensation which was to become the established Taoist church.

They believed that the Tao had manifested itself in the guise of Lao tzu, down through the ages, to teach the culture heroes of antiquity and to save mankind from the periodic cataclysms brought about by benighted rulers incapable of worshipping and serving the Tao. Now, at the end of the Han, the god appears again, but not any more to advise an emperor but to appoint the leader of this popular movement, Chang Tao-ling, as his successor. He conferred on Chang Tao-ling the hereditary title “Celestial Master” and the priestly function to guide the people through the chaos of the age until a new virtuous dynasty—worthy of the god’s approval—would have succeeded to the Han. The third leader of the Celestial Master’s movement, Chang Lu, did in fact resist the concrete temptation to proclaim himself king and disregarded a prophecy intended to designate him as the new holder of the Heavenly Mandate. Consequently, when the region was conquered by Ts’ao Ts’ao in 215 A.D., Chang Lu felt free to hail the ruler of the Wei

Dynasty as the new legitimate emperor sanctioned by the "Most High Lord Lao". This more sophisticated attitude toward political authority contained no incentives to start a messianic rebellion against the secular government and the Celestial Master cannot be regarded as a political messiah. He is the founder of a church which made the creation of T'ai-p'ing a priestly and liturgical task, transposing it onto a spiritual level. The priests of the Tao of the "Most High Lord Lao" were not to oppose but to assist the secular ruler. Although they shared the belief that Great Peace was to be realized through politico-religious administration and organized their parishes accordingly, they saw their secular political role only as an interim solution. The Celestial Master and his successors ideally were to be the spiritual teachers of the rightful emperor, in the same way as they imagined Lao tzu to have been the Celestial Teacher of Emperors in bygone ages.<sup>13</sup>

In the centuries that followed, several prominent Taoist masters, and not only those of the Celestial Master's tradition, curried favor with the secular power and won imperial patronage for the church by declaring that the messianic prophecy of T'ai-p'ing was fulfilled in their rule. This happened in the fifth century, when Taoists of the Ling-pao tradition recognized the Liu-Sung Dynasty (420-479) as the legitimate continuation of the Han. It happened again in 415 A.D., under the foreign rulers of North China, when a certain K'ou Ch'ien-chih received a revelation from the god Lord Lao investing him with the title Celestial Master and the task to reform the church. He secured state patronage for the Taoist church by declaring the T'o-pa Wei Emperor T'ai-wu to be the "Perfect Ruler of Great Peace".<sup>14</sup> K'ou Ch'ien-chih once stated his mission in the following words:

"I had been practicing the Way in retirement and had never involved myself in worldly responsibilities, when suddenly I received these secret bequests from the gods, stating that I should ... come to the aid of the Perfect Ruler of Great Peace in carrying on the thousand-year rule that has been interrupted."<sup>15</sup>

This thousand-year rule again can only refer to the golden age of the Han, and its "interruption" to the traumatic experience of its fall.

While some Taoists thus complacently arranged themselves with the powers that be, others were not convinced. In the lower reaches of society, messianic prophecy not only lived on but the tribulations of the times, invasions by non-Chinese conquerors in the North, fratricidal battles in the South, mass migrations, epidemics and general insecurity engendered an even acuter awareness that the end was near.

In the *Spirit Spells of the Abyss* (*Tung-yüan shen-chou ching*), a Taoist scripture outside the Celestial Master's tradition, the end of the world is announced in hundreds of gruesome predictions:

"Listen well, all of you, the Tao declares, I will now tell you of things that are destined to transpire at the end of the kalpa. 3000 years after Fu Hsi, a great flood will overwhelm the people and half of them will perish ... Wind and rain will not arrive in due season, the five grains will not ripen any more and evil will grow in the hearts of men ... Pestilential emanations will spread everywhere under Heaven and ninety different kinds of disease will wipe out all evildoers."<sup>16</sup>

The scripture goes on to predict how 37 000 red-faced killer demons will release pestilential vapors to exterminate all living beings. Only the Taoist believers and the devotees of this scripture of spirit spells will survive, safely ensconced in caverna deep inside the sacred mountains where Taoist mythology had placed the hidden paradises of the immortals. After the world has been purified by the scourges of war, plague and flood, a new messiah, named Li Hung, a new emissary of Lord Lao on High, will descend to inaugurate the reign of Great Peace together with the chosen Taoist people. The term for the 'chosen people' is *chung-min*, "seed people" since they will be the seeds of a whole new race.

The *Spirit Spells'* description of T'ai-p'ing echoes the utopias of Han times:

"When the Perfect Lord (Li Hung) comes forth into the world, he will reign by non-intervention (*wu-wei*) and there will be no more suffering by armed violence, by punishment or in prison. Under the reign of the Holy King, people will have abundance and joy ... They will act only in accordance with Taoist doctrine and the Taoist priests will be great ministers ... One sowing will yield nine crops and men will live up to 3000 years."<sup>17</sup>

Rebellions inspired by the imminent descent of Lord Li Hung were rampant in North China at the time of the Celestial Master K'ou Ch'ien-chih's prominence at court and one of his missions

was to combat them. Describing the wickedness of the people in this last age, Lord Lao had in fact warned K'ou Ch'ien-chih of the false prophets who will incite the people with slogans like: "Lord Lao should reign! Li Hung will manifest himself!" These rebels, said Lord Lao to K'ou Ch'ien-chih,

"lure and confuse the multitudes with what they call the language of demons and gods ... They pretend to official functions and titles, attract followers as numerous as ants and devastate the land ... , there are not few who claim to be Li Hung. In great anger I (Lord Lao) glare at these villains who pretend to speak in my name."<sup>18</sup>

The established Taoist church in the North was thus taking its stance against the rebellious millenarian unrest among the people. This does not mean that K'ou Ch'ien-chih did not share the belief in the messianic prophecy; rather, the ire of the god Lord Lao who spoke to him was aroused by the fact that these popular rebels aped the true revelation of the messiah in their sacrilegious claims:

"Those fools who are deceitful without end and have all taken to disloyalty, this assembly of run-away criminals, serfs and slaves, falsely call themselves Li Hung! To think that my person would mingle with this vulgar, stinking flesh, with these slaves, dogs, and goblins and act the part of one of these evil rebels! These villainous impostor of today spout heresies and destroy the orthodox writings."<sup>19</sup>

Lord Lao is in fact condemning the rebels for pretending to carry out what is *his* exclusive task:

"At the time that I shall manifest myself, (I shall do so) in order to effect the transformation of Heaven and Earth. The old doctrines of all books and codes will have to perish. A reformed orthodoxy will again be manifest. I shall summon all those who are to have long life, and I shall gratify them with the divine drug; they will transcend the world as immortals and follow me as my escort. The wicked ones will be turned into good; whoever meets with me will have his years of life increased.

If there be a King or a Son of Heaven who is a deserving ruler of the people, I shall immediately have the local gods do obeisance to him as in the olden times. But if in his government he deviates from the doctrine, an enlightened saint will replace him to pacify the people."<sup>20</sup>

In 444 A.D. K'ou Ch'ien-chih had succeeded to have Taoism declared the official state religion of the Northern Wei Dynasty. Thus Lord Lao's condemnation of the messianic impostors reflects K'ou Ch'ien-chih's indignation against the popular movements which apparently did not adhere to the Wei Dynasty and their

reformed court Taoism. An emperor who flattered himself to think that he was “Perfect Ruler of Great Peace” (reign title 440-451 A.D.), could not be pleased with any rebel movement proclaiming the advent of Lord Lao’s emissary Li Hung, as the true emperor of T’ai-p’ing.

A similar line of demarcation between higher and lower orders divided, around the same time, the established Buddhist clergy from the popular movements inspired by the messianic belief in the coming of Maitreya. According to the orthodox view of the Buddhist church, the last age (of the Extinction of the Dharma) was still far away, their Maitreya resided in Tuṣita Heaven and was represented as the elegant, serene statue of the youthful Bodhisattva so well known in Buddhist art. However, in the popular Buddhist scriptures of the same period, the demon forces of the last age had already been unleashed and rumors of the imminent descent of the new Buddha Maitreya inspired rebellions.<sup>21</sup>

These facts have generally lead to the conclusion that “the proponents of a messianic eschatology must be, in some sense, have-nots: otherwise what would be the point of their trying to transcend the world as they find it?”<sup>22</sup> M. Strickmann, from whom I have quoted this sentence, has studied another strand of the Taoist messianic tradition in the 4th to 6th centuries which leads us into the literate, cultivated upper-class of the Southern Dynasties and therefore seems to contradict the theory that makes messianic ideologies the consolation of the poor.

A highly literate group of Southern aristocratic families developed, in the 4th century, a new Taoist movement around the sacred Mountain of Mao-shan near Nanking. A central issue in the divine revelations bestowed on the visionaries of this new sect, was “the expectation of a savior who, after a preliminary time of trial during which the wicked were to be exterminated, would descend from heaven and summon the elect to join him in the reign of Great Peace ... The basic textual authority for these eschatological prospects was the *Annals of the Sage who is to come, Lord of the Tao of Shang-ch’ing*.... It is there that the teachings were specified ... whereby one might, even then, prepare for the advent: ingestion of solar, lunar, and astral essences; propitiation of celestial spirits who would assure a satisfactory transformation when the moment arrived; and

preliminary exercises in the art of walking the stars of the Dipper. For each of these operations a scripture was also revealed.”<sup>23</sup>

In these revelations, the members of the Mao-shan sect were promised exalted rank and high office in the imminent new imperium of T'ai-p'ing. But what attraction could such high office hold for the privileged nobles of the upper class? The answer lies in the social history of the Six Dynasties' period: When, in the 4th century, the imperial court had fled southward from the foreign invaders in the North, and established the Southern dynasties in Chiang-nan, the old Southern aristocratic families had been ousted from their privileged positions in that region. On this background, the whole phenomenon of the Mao-shan revelations can be seen as a celestial compensation bestowed upon the Southern aristocracy in the times of their social decline: the Taoist gods on Mount Mao revealed to them the message that the present order of injustice will not last. Apocalyptic scourges will destroy it totally in the year *ting-hai* of the 60 year cycle. Only the elect will survive inside the cavern palaces of Mount Mao. There they were to await the descent of Li Hung, the “Sage who is to come”, in the *jen-ch'en* year.

Different years in the 4th, 5th and 6th centuries were variously identified with the ordained *dies irae* of the divine prophecies, but time went on until in 614 A.D. another popular rebellion under a leader who called himself Emperor Li Hung initiated the war that was to lead to the establishment of the T'ang Dynasty. And now we can understand the full impact and the propagandistic value of the well-known fact that the founder of the T'ang, by the name of Li Yüan, claimed that his family Li descended from the Sage Lao tzu whose terrestrial family name had been Li and whose messianic envoy was Li Hung. The first T'ang emperor assumed the imperial title Kao-tsu, like the founder of the Han, and reestablished the unity of the Chinese empire in conscious reference to the Han. As all founders of Chinese dynasties after him, he claimed to fulfill the prophecy of T'ai-p'ing, which the Taoist church and the Taoist rebels had proclaimed and preached throughout the dark centuries of disunion and disharmony.<sup>24</sup>

One more, and final, word on the Taoist church. What I have tried to show is that this Taoist religion, far from being a sprawling, shapeless, demon-ridden folk religion that usurped the name and

perverted the wisdom of a “pure” Taoist philosophy, was on the contrary a Church of the Elect. This church had crystallized out of the eschatological anguish that accompanied the disintegration of the Han empire. Its nature can indeed not be understood except on the background of what one may almost call the “Old Testament” of the imperial system as it was seen in Taoist eyes.<sup>25</sup>

The Church of the Celestial Master understood itself as a recreation, on a higher spiritual level, of the lost cosmic order and splendor of the Han imperium. Its rituals were directly inspired by Han court ceremonial and by the imperial worship of Heaven. It was to the Taoist masters that emperors of the various small dynasties turned for an ideological sanction of their ambition to unify all of China under their rule. To a lesser degree, they also turned to Buddhist monks. But it is essential to realize that it was the Taoist messianic dream that has kept alive, all throughout the centuries of disunion (and ever since), the nostalgia for the vanished Great Peace of the unified realm.

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\*The present article is, with minor changes, the text of a lecture given at the Department of Religion of the University of Hawaii, Honolulu, March 1978. Its purpose is to summarize, for a wider audience, recent insights concerning the considerable indigenous contribution to messianic thought in China, the latter being, up to now, known too exclusively in its Buddhist manifestations. For this reason Buddhist eschatology has been, perhaps too completely, excluded from the scope of this article.

<sup>1</sup> Carmen Blacker, “Millenarian Aspects of the New Religions in Japan”, in Donald H. Shively ed., *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture*, Princeton U.P. 1971, p. 564.

<sup>2</sup> Marjorie Topley, “The Great Way of Former Heaven: a group of Chinese secret religious sects”, in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* XXVI, 2 (1963), p. 362-392.

<sup>3</sup> Arthur Waley, *The Analects of Confucius*, London 1964, p. 49.

<sup>4</sup> Except the Legalists.

<sup>5</sup> For a recent analysis of the term *t'ai-p'ing*, cf. Max Kaltenmark, “The Ideology of the *T'ai-p'ing ching*”, in H. Welch and A. Seidel ed., *Facets of Taoism*, Yale U.P. 1978, p. 21-22.

<sup>6</sup> Tr. in Werner Eichhorn, “T'ai-p'ing und T'ai-p'ing Religion”, in *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung* V, 1 (1957), p. 120.

<sup>7</sup> Max Kaltenmark, *op.cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Werner Eichhorn, *op.cit.*, p. 120.

<sup>10</sup> Joseph R. Levenson and Franz Schurmann, *China: An Interpretive History*, Berkeley 1971, p. 127.

<sup>11</sup> The imperial sacrifice and the inscription in honor of the god Lao-tzu composed at that occasion are described and translated in A. Seidel, *La divinisation de Lao tseu dans le taoïsme des Han*, Publ. of the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient LXXI, Paris 1969, p. 34-50, 121-128.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. A. Seidel, "The Image of the Perfect Ruler in Early Taoist Messianism: Lao-tzu and Li Hung", *History of Religions* IX, 2-3 (1969-70), p. 225.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 227-228.

<sup>14</sup> This title was the official era-name for the years 440-451 A.D. of the Wei Dynasty.

<sup>15</sup> Tr. from *Wei-shu* 35 in Richard B. Mather, "K'ou Ch'ien-chih and the Taoist Theocracy at the Northern Wei Court, 425-451", in H. Welch and A. Seidel ed., *Facets of Taoism*, Yale U.P. 1978, p. 114.

<sup>16</sup> *Tung-yüan shen-chou ching*, in *Tao-tsang* 170, ch. 1.3b7-8, 4a7-10.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 1.11a; cf. A. Seidel, *History of Religions* IX, 2-3, p. 239.

<sup>18</sup> *Lao-chün yin-sung chieh ching*, in *Tao-tsang* 562, p. 4a-b.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6a.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5a-b; cf. A. Seidel, *op.cit.*, p. 241-242.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. E. Zürcher, "'Prince Moonlight' Messianism and Eschatology in Early Medieval Chinese Buddhism", *T'oung Pao* LXVIII (1982), p. 1-75.

<sup>22</sup> Michel Strickmann, "The Alchemy of T'ao Hung-ching", in H. Welch and A. Seidel ed., *Facets of Taoism*, Yale U.P. 1978, p. 186.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153.

<sup>24</sup> On the messianic concepts involved in the legitimation of the T'ang, cf. A. Seidel, *op.cit.*, p. 244-247.

<sup>25</sup> On this Taoist view of Chinese history, cf. also A. Seidel, "Der Kaiser und sein Ratgeber", *Saeculum* XXIX,1 (1978), p. 18-50; and "Das neue Testament des Tao", *Saeculum* XXIX,2 (1978), p. 147-172.

## THE GODDESS: THEOLOGICAL SIGN OR RELIGIOUS SYMBOL?

LARRY D. SHINN

It is nothing new to suggest to historians of religion that religious symbols are intended to function as more than signifiers of known realities. However, in what ways signs and symbols differ is a subject worth occasional reflection so that unintended, truncated, or illicit distinctions are corrected by the historical record itself. It might appear unusual to historians to discuss sign and symbol in the context of one segment of the current feminist theological movement that is influenced as much by social and political concerns as a field of study as it is by academic ones. Yet it is often that which appears to be a fad or sectarian excess at one moment in history that can become the grist for the historian's mill at another (could one in the first century have believed that the marginal, sectarian Essene community would someday attract the inordinate attention it has been accorded among twentieth century biblical scholars?). In any case, both of these issues (namely, the importance of the religious sign/symbol distinction and the use of feminist goddess symbolism as a case in point) should be briefly addressed by way of introduction.

In the early part of this century, Carl Jung set out what he understood to be the clear distinction between sign and symbol. He said, "An expression that stands for a known thing always remains a mere sign and is never a symbol. It is quite impossible to create a living symbol, i.e., one that is pregnant with meaning, from known associates."<sup>1</sup> Because Jung was primarily interested in symbols as the observable data of the unconscious (whether the individual's "personal unconscious" or the universally shared "collective unconscious"), he focused on the ability of symbols to point to hidden realities (e.g., a dream's four-armed cross as a symbol for psychic balance and unity).<sup>2</sup> For Jung, a sign was merely an "abbreviated design" of a thing already known (e.g., a hand wave for a

greeting). A symbol represented a previously unrecognized psychological force seeking conscious expression.

Writing about the Ndembu tribe in contemporary Africa, the anthropologist Victor Turner took Jung's understanding of sign and symbol as his starting point as he spelled out the social significance of this distinction in the context of Ndembu ritual. Turner noted that symbols are the smallest unit of ritual (i.e., objects, events, gestures, etc.) which can be understood *only* "in a time series in relation to other events; for symbols are essentially involved in social process."<sup>3</sup> Symbols are, therefore, condensed and unified presentations of social and moral meanings packaged in simple natural guises (e.g., milk tree = mother's milk = mother's love). Arguing against anthropological interpreters who say that symbols are "conscious, verbalized, indigenous interpretations" of important realities, Turner suggested instead that symbols have various "layers" of meaning—socially speaking.<sup>4</sup> For Turner, signs are self explanatory while symbols must be interpreted not only in terms of the particular ritual in which they occur, but also in the context of the total social symbol system.<sup>5</sup>

In his many writings on symbolism, Paul Ricoeur evidences a similar interest in distinguishing between sign and symbol, although primarily in the linguistic and philosophical spheres. Recognizing that symbols are found most often in the expressions of poetry, dreams, and religion, Ricoeur stresses the "double intentionality" of symbols.<sup>6</sup> Signs and symbols share the common feature of a literal meaning. That is, symbols do "signify" or point to explicit meanings that are known. But what sets a symbol apart from a sign is its implicit meaning (what Ricoeur calls the "symbolic meaning") which is only an "opaque glimpse" of the reality to which it points.<sup>7</sup> Ricoeur argues that a symbol is "food for thought" because "it yields its meaning in enigma and not through translation."<sup>8</sup>

In sum, "the symbol in fact is the very movement of the primary meaning which makes us share the hidden meaning and thus assimilates us to the thing symbolized, without our being able to set hold of the similarity intellectually."<sup>9</sup> Symbols are "the language of the Sacred" because they both tell us something we can conceptualize and yet point to an experienced reality that can be only partially known.

In an essay originally published under the title, "Religion as a Symbol System," Clifford Geertz dismisses the above distinctions between sign and symbol as he plots his own theoretical web.<sup>10</sup> He recognizes the inappropriateness of natural signs (e.g., dark clouds as signifiers of rain) and conventional signs (e.g., white flag as indication of surrender) being considered on a par with religious symbols. But he also rejects the notion that symbols should be confined to those words, objects, acts, or events which express an "oblique and figurative" meaning (such as Jung and Ricoeur insist). Consequently, Geertz sides with those who consider symbols to be "any object, act, event, quality or relation which serves as a vehicle for a conception—the conception is the symbol's 'meaning'."<sup>11</sup> As such, symbols are abstractions originating in the experience of persons which are then fixed in perceptible, conceptual forms.

For Geertz, religious symbols both *reflect* (i.e., represent "models of") the experiential and cultural world out of which they come and *organize* (i.e., provide "models for") that world according to the symbolic design. In his words, "[Symbols] give meaning, i.e., objective conceptual form, to social and psychological reality both by shaping themselves to it and by shaping it to themselves."<sup>12</sup> With this understanding of symbol, Geertz then proceeds to give a comprehensive definition of religion as a complex and self-legitimizing symbol system that has become a standard point of reference in religious studies.

One result of Geertz's essay is to point to the variety of views on the distinction between sign and symbol obvious from the above examples. A second consequence is to demonstrate graphically the pivotal importance of the study of symbols to any full investigation of the religious life. Finally, what Geertz's interpretation of symbols unintentionally does, as will be seen in the conclusion to this essay, is to reveal how a truncated view of symbols leads to a distorted theological understanding of the Divine-human relationship.

Some contemporary radical feminist theologians who embrace the Goddess as the supreme symbol for women consciously borrow Geertz's understanding of symbol. Consequently, their use of Geertz provides one point of contact between symbol studies and feminist Goddess formulations and is one reason to focus on their views.<sup>13</sup> A second reason for exploring a contemporary and

peripheral theological movement (i.e., only the “revolutionary” feminist theologians) is that much can be learned from contemporary movements and disciplines that may be considered by some to be faddish or just plain misguided. Professor R. J. Zwi Werblowsky in an article assessing a past decade’s infatuation with Zen said, “The historian of religion, duly remembering that many religious developments take place by way of mis-interpretations of what may perhaps be termed fruitful illegitimacies, will modestly confine himself to asking what a phenomenon was in its historical and social context....”<sup>14</sup>

In a short article on the faddishness of studies on new religious movements (i.e., the “cults”) Professor Werblowsky remarks, “Students of religion are often tempted, for understandable reasons, to interrupt their serious researches and be lured in the direction of sociology of scholarly as well as pseudo-scholarly activity.”<sup>15</sup> In still another review article, Professor Werblowsky decries the “mushrooming fads”, of which “Woman in Religion” is judged to be one, as he commits the major portion of the essay to a discussion of the work of Wendy O’Flaherty which he considers “highly stimulating and important.”<sup>16</sup> Consequently, though the field of religious studies *is* prone to transitory fashions in content and approach, historians of religion can find value in examining those very movements that are not yet historically legitimated. It should not be judged odd, therefore, that this author has been seduced to consider the implications of the feminists’ Goddess solution to the whole of symbol studies.

In what follows, I do not attempt to correct or put in historical perspective all of the claims for the Goddess or her value for women since that would comprise a full study in itself.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, that task has been ably outlined, if not fully addressed, by Rosemary Radford Ruether, a feminist theologian who stands outside the revolutionaries’ camp. Ruether challenges the Goddess (and witch) solutions of feminists in her article, “Goddesses and Witches: Liberation and Countercultural Feminism,” by questioning the historical accuracy, cultural bias, sexual politics, and theological adequacy of such solutions.<sup>18</sup> Professor Werblowsky’s review article also points to the historical fallacies that underlie much feminist recasting of history and reinterpretations of the Goddess. Conse-

quently, the task of this essay is a different one. It is to take seriously one type of feminist statement of the problem of conceiving of god as male and of imagining the divine as female (Goddess) as a way of uncovering an important dimension of religious symbols that is distinct from the signifying function and which much current scholarship seems to overlook.

Finally, this author is reminded of a comment Alasdair MacIntyre made a decade ago as he reviewed the contemporary theologies, exemplified by John A. Robinson's *Honest To God*, which tried to make notions of God respectable to a twentieth century audience. MacIntyre said: "...it is highly important that the theologians should not be left alone with their discussions, to carry them on as *they* please. For the significance of their discussions extends far beyond theology....the danger is that God will be once more treated as an in-group totem."<sup>19</sup> What finally is important about the thesis of this essay is that it questions not only one particular feminist view of gender and its relation to symbols of the Divine, but also all those interpretations of religious symbols that would reduce them to one particular discipline's view (e.g., psychological, sociological or theological). And the challenge to the theoretical formulations discussed above will be found in the historical example of Ramakrishna Paramahansa; for it is in such actual historical uses of symbols that any symbol theory must finally seek support.

### *The Problem*

One of the general issues in religious studies that continues to be discussed is the problem of gender in relation to religious symbols. However, for contemporary feminist theologians (of whatever bent) this issue occupies a special place in their writings. Whether decrying the patriarchal images of God (especially in the Western religious traditions since this movement is mainly North American in origin and scope) or extolling the liberating symbol of the Goddess (variously named and from any time and place), most feminist goddess theologies appear to proceed with the *assumption* that the gender of religious symbols *necessarily* has a homologous or one-to-one relationship to the psychological, social and religious self-

understandings of men and women. Even some radical feminist theologians who do not offer a goddess solution, make the same error. For example, Mary Daly makes explicit this assumption in a negative assessment of male-gods:

The symbol of the Father God,...has in turn rendered service to [patriarchal] society by making its mechanism for the oppression of women appear right and fitting. If God in "his" heaven is a father ruling "his" people, then it is in the "nature" of things and according to divine plan and the order of the universe that society be male-dominated.<sup>20</sup>

The exact linkage of male religious symbols with the social and religious status of men is stated by Daly in these words:

Since "God" is male, the male is God. God the Father legitimates all earthly God-fathers...[and] the idea of a uniquely divine incarnation in a male, the God man of the "hypostatic union" is inherently sexist and oppressive. Christology is idolatry.<sup>21</sup>

As Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow note, "It is not only the gender of God that Daly finds oppressive...but also *His* character and attributes."<sup>22</sup> What is important for this essay is that Daly and other "revolutionaries" reject traditional male-dominated religious traditions (notably Judaism, Christianity and Islam) because of injustices and oppression which they attribute to male images (i.e., symbolization and characterizations) of the Divine.<sup>23</sup> From this perspective, male symbols of God validate male superiority and female inferiority with their social and psychological consequences.

Not surprisingly, Clifford Geertz's understanding of symbols as "vehicles for conceptions" serves the revolutionaries well. Applying Geertz's logic and language regarding symbols to feminine concerns, Christ argues, "Religions centered on the worship of a male God create 'moods' and 'motivations' that keep women in a state of psychological dependence on men and male authority...."<sup>24</sup> I would agree with the revolutionaries that there is a misogynist streak running throughout history (though I would not confine it primarily to Western, religious or male-God histories). It is clear that the actual roles of women socially and religiously have usually been subordinated to those of men. Likewise, it is clear that this subordination (if not downright oppression in many cases) was sanctioned or encouraged by some church fathers from Paul (and those who wrote in his name) through Tertullian and Augustine

down to contemporary ones who argue against the ordination of women.

While the abasement of women has taken a variety of forms socially, a common religious practice has been to include women in the worship life of the church and synagogue and to exclude them from institutional roles (e.g., priest, rabbi, etc.). Sanction for this practice sometimes comes from an appeal to the gender of the disciples in relation to divine gender. For example, Haye Van der Meer argues in the Catholic context,

The priest stands in the stead of Christ. It is his office to beget from humanity Children of God for heaven (ICor. 4:15). To beget life is, in humanity, the business of the male, Christ brought new life to humanity. For this reason he appeared among us as a male, because his work was man's work....Therefore, the first in Godhead is not called Mother but Father.<sup>25</sup>

There can be no doubt that religious symbols have functioned in some religious traditions and at certain periods precisely as Daly and Christ have noted. But that the same symbols have functioned to provide religious meaning and status to *both* men and women seems to be ignored.<sup>26</sup> A reasonable question to ask is whether or not a mostly negative rendering of the role and status of women throughout Jewish and Christian history is not as skewed and biased as those defensive accounts which would deny religious oppression of women? Nonetheless, such a debate over the actual "facts" of history misses the revolutionary feminists' recasting of their discussion of symbols as a social/economic/psychological one instead of a religious/spiritual one.

In sum, for radical feminist theology, the problem is essentially one of male religious symbols being used to subordinate or to oppress women socially and psychologically while exalting men and aggrandizing their social and religious positions. Their solution is to seek a goddess who can provide the desired status and power for women.

### *The Goddess Solution*

The alternatives to a male god for feminist theologians are numerous (see f.n. 22). Some would reject a male god in favor of an androgynous one (Tribble) or bisexual sets of symbols like Jesus and Mary (Fiorenza). Carol Christ would offer a goddess linked to

women's experiences while Rita Gross proposes a great Goddess (c.f., Magna Mater) modeled after the great goddesses of India (though obviously taken out of historical context). Carol Ochs argues for a rejection of all gender symbols for the Divine in her book, *Behind the Sex of God*, and suggests instead a "theistic monism."<sup>27</sup> Mary Daly, it would seem, has abandoned all hope in any religious tradition or language in her turning toward women's experience as the source for life-modeling images and symbols.<sup>28</sup>

While each of the above solutions could be put in historical context and scrutinized by comparative analysis, it is only the Goddess model and its implications that will be discussed in this essay. And as I have said earlier, I am less interested in entering the feminist debate than I am in clarifying what I view to be a fundamental error in the *assumption* underlying both the statement of the problem and the offering of the Goddess as a solution. Put simply, the assumption of gender correspondence regarding symbols seems clearly to undergird much of that theology. For example, it is in the Goddess solution of Christ where the premise is expressed that religious symbols are essentially vehicles for conception (socially and psychologically) and are to be understood literally (i.e., the Goddess is *for* women). Likewise, Gross' formulation of the Goddess solution in an Indian context utilizes essentially the same assumption only in an Asian context.

Employing Geertz's symbol/concept definition, Christ turns to the Goddess solution as a logical extension of the premise that there is a gender correspondence between divine symbol and human's role-models:

As women struggle to create a new culture in which women's power, bodies, will, and bonds are celebrated, it seems natural that the Goddess would reemerge as symbol of the newfound beauty, strength, and power of women.<sup>29</sup>

For Christ, the symbol of the Goddess is to some extent informed by the ancient and modern, the so-called Eastern and Western women's own experience. The result for Christ is a Goddess who affirms women's power, women's bodies, women's wills, and women's bonds to each other. For example, she says,

In Goddess-centered context, ...the will is valued. *A woman is encouraged to know her will, to believe that her will is valid, and to believe that her will can be achieved*

*in the world*, three powers traditionally denied to her in patriarchy.<sup>30</sup> [Christ's emphasis]

The Goddess Christ envisions is a collective symbol of women's needs, values and experiences. And while raising the issue of the ontological status of such a synthetic Goddess and providing three possible answers to such a question, Christ skirts the issue by affirming all three solutions in a way which seems to soften, if not contradict, her assumption of divine symbol/human role correspondence:

The diversity of explanations of the meaning of the Goddess symbol suggests that symbols have a richer significance than any explications of their meaning can express. . . . Let me simply state that women. . . are therefore in an excellent position to recognize the power and primacy of symbols.<sup>31</sup>

One question appropriate to raise here is "What more than images of women's role, statuses, and powers does the Goddess symbol provide?" Perhaps the more important question is, "To what extent are symbols vehicles for conceptions if their meaning(s) cannot be explicated?" (See Geertz.)

Rita Gross begins her re-imaging of the goddess by recognizing that "Feminine symbolism does not seem to guarantee anything about the role and status of women."<sup>32</sup> Gross agrees with Christ, in spite of a seemingly defiant historical record, that where goddess traditions are found there seems to be a positive value given to women's power and experience (i.e., a psychological correspondence). Stressing the positive side of feminine symbolism, Gross too asserts a direct link between the gender of divine symbol and devotee:

The sheer form of the Goddess, with Her feminine pronouns, Her breasts, womb, vagina, denies all that [i.e., Western male denigration]. She confirm us in looking—at the divine level—like us. We are indeed in the image of God. . . .<sup>33</sup>

Gross is not unaware of the critics of the Goddess solution who say that the Goddess as she is found historically is still primarily the product of patriarchal cultures and, therefore, more a projection of the feminine by men than by women. She concludes that it may be possible only in a "postpatriarchal symbol system" to genuinely assert a nonsexist, yet empowering, Goddess symbol. Nonetheless,

she argues that it is neither possible nor desirable to do without symbolic or mythic thinking in the interim. It is not possible because many modes of human expression must use metaphor, image, and symbol to communicate personal experiences and feelings. It is not desirable because "If anything, our [the technological West's] language is already myth-starved."<sup>34</sup>

Claiming women's experiences to be too narrow and ancient goddesses to be too remote, Gross suggests that the living goddesses of India are the best source for "re-imagining the Goddess."<sup>35</sup> What is the composite image the Hindu Goddess affords? First the strength, transcendence, and dynamic creativity of Goddesses such as Durgā provide models for women's creativity and dynamic strength. Second, the Hindu Goddess embodies the coincidence of opposites (e.g., creation/destruction, good/bad, continuity/discontinuity) exemplified by goddesses such as Kālī who encompass the full range of women's potentialities (e.g., raging and peacefulness, sources of birth yet also themselves finite and destructible). Third, the Hindu Goddess as Mother is seen in the striking image of Gaṅgā (personification of the Ganges River) from whom all of earthly life is asserted to have come. While one should *not* assert this birth-giving and nurturing image to be the *only* one for women (e.g., women as mothers and/or housewives), such an image validates women as incarnate, genital creatures. Fourth, the Indian Goddess is an originator of culture as Sarasvatī, the Goddess of learning and the arts, demonstrates and as such values women's roles in society-formation and levelling of role statuses. Finally, the Goddess erotically and inextricably related to God (e.g., Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa) reintroduces "sexuality as a significant religious metaphor." What this offers women is not only an appreciation of their own sexuality, but an overcoming of the bodyspirit dichotomy which can lead to a body-hate in the West.

The composite Goddess Gross re-images is ostensibly set in the context of the androgynous nature of all Indian divinities. She even asserts that bisexuality in any theology is a "fundamentally healthy and whole way to approach the need for personal imagery."<sup>36</sup> However, no explication of the Hindu God who is to be re-imagined occurs, nor does one seem needed—for women. As Gross concludes,

As I look at Her now, what seems most significant is not Her similarity to, or difference from, the images of male deities, though there are plenty of each, but Her sheer presence *as female*. By being there as female, She validates me as I am. Her limitlessness is exemplary for me. It is good to be the image of the Goddess. That is the most important of Her many meanings.<sup>37</sup>

For both Christ and Gross, the Goddess provides value and meaning for *women* because she is *female*. Whatever the qualifications offered (Christ's symbolic diversity or Gross' bisexual context for the Goddess), it is clear that the logic of divine symbol/human status correspondence according to gender is *assumed* by Christ and Gross in their Goddess *solution* just as Daly, Christ and other revolutionaries make this link in their statement of the theological *problem*. A brief portrayal of one of the most famous Goddesses in India can assist us in evaluating the gender-correspondence assumption that underlies revolutionary feminist theologians' statements of both the male-symbol problem and the Goddess solution. More importantly, Kālī can teach us much about the religious dimension of symbols.

### *The Destructive Kālī:*

To place the debate about gender and religious symbols in a concrete religious context and life skirts the danger Christ and Plaskow say occurs when subjective feelings and experiences alone guide such discussions.<sup>38</sup> I have chosen the goddess Kālī not simply because she provides a direct link with Gross' solution, but also because there are few places in the world where the worship of a goddess has persisted in such a vital and primary way as that of Kālī in Bengal. I have chosen the goddess Kālī also because she has been throughout Indian history a striking and multi-faceted divine image that has promoted seemingly contradictory values and attitudes such as fear and love, madness and calm, and killing and nurturing. Therefore, Kālī has meant different things to different Hindus and her ambiguity as a religious symbol allows us to consider the various levels upon which religious symbols operate. The following myth from the early *purāṇic* (medieval) period still remains the central account for her devotees of her origin and nature...and the source of her most common iconographical images:

A one-hundred-year war between the demons (*asuras*) led by Mahiṣāsura and the gods (*devas*) led by Indra was going badly for the gods. In a council of the gods it was decided that they would pool their strength and from one terrible emanation of light from their foreheads was created a goddess (*devī*) whose defying laugh and loud roar shook all the worlds (heavens, earth and hells). This Supreme Goddess rode a lion and was usually called Durgā, but also Ambika or Chaṇḍī. She entered the battle with great gusto and tore the demons limb from limb as her lion roared and she wielded her destructive weapons deftly.

She killed Mahiṣāsura's two most powerful generals and at last engaged in battle with the demon king himself. Mahiṣāsura assumed the form of a gigantic buffalo and began to trample Devī's army. Enraged at his impudence, the Mother of the worlds quaffed a divine intoxicant and her eyes became red. The demon king roared and she responded, "Roar, roar, O fool, for a moment while I drink this wine," and then she proceeded to step upon his neck and she killed him with her spear. The gods and all the heavenly hosts praised her as the creator and protector of the world, the embodiment of the three Vedas and the sacrifice, the destroyer of all evil, and the bounteous giver of all wealth, glory, children, and earthly rewards.

Then the demons arose again to usurp the throne of India, this time under the leadership of the brothers Śumbha and Niśumbha. Durgā entered the world as the beautiful maiden Kālikā and lived on Mount Himavat. The demon king Śumbha sent his messenger to ask the beautiful maiden to share his rule of the world. The maiden responded, "He who conquers me in battle, . . . and is my match in strength in the world shall be my husband." Such haughtiness angered the demon king who sent one of his generals to drag the girl from her mountain. But as the general and his army approached Mount Himavat, he was reduced to ashes merely by a "hum" from the mouth of the Goddess, and her lion quickly clawed and pommelled the remaining demons to death. When word reached Śumbha that his army was destroyed by the troublesome maiden, he sent his two fiercest generals, Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa and additional troops.

As Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa approached the mountain home of the Goddess, she recognized the escalation of conflict that was about to take place and her face "became dark as ink. Out of the surface of her forehead, fierce with frown, issued suddenly Kālī of terrible countenance, armed with sword and noose. Bearing the strange skull-topped staff, decorated with a garland of skulls, clad in a tiger's skin, very appalling owing to her emaciated flesh, with gaping mouth, fearful with her tongue lolling out, having deep-sunk reddish eyes and filling the regions of the sky with her roars, impetuously falling upon and slaughtering the great asuras in that army, she devoured those foes of the gods. Snatching the elephants with one hand she flung them into her mouth together with their rear men and drivers and their warrior-riders and bells."

As Indra and the gods joined the war with the demon army, one demon named Raktabīja posed a particularly difficult problem. Each time a drop of this demon's blood hit the ground, a new demon was born. As the demon bled profusely from his wounds, the demon army was replenished. Kālī entered this fray by drinking up all the blood on the battlefield and destroying

Raktabīja. Then she turned her wrath on Śumbha and Niśumbha themselves and a cosmic battle with divine weapons ensued. The ending however was swift as Kālī decapitated Niśumbha with her sword and ran Śumbha through with her trident-spear. The gods rejoiced as they proclaimed Kālī mother and protector of the world and the story's narrator agrees: "Thus, O King, the adorable Devī, although eternal, incarnating again and again, protects the world."<sup>39</sup>

The *Devī-Māhātmyam* is one of the earliest textual attempts in India to combine several of the goddess traditions to form a composite Devī or Great Goddess (much as Gross does), and in so doing to give an account of the origin and nature of Kālī. I would urge the reader to explore the history of Kālī's independent and merged traditions and images in the introductory account by David R. Kinsley called *The Sword and the Flute*.<sup>40</sup> Two conclusions he reaches concerning Kālī are that even after the attempt to merge all goddesses into one goddess, "Kālī can be shown to have an identity of her own, quite distinct from all other deities in the tradition, and this identity may not be reduced to her sex,"<sup>41</sup> and that Kālī was strange, terrible, frightening, and clearly mad, but she was, for all that, 'Mother.'<sup>42</sup>

It has been the case that composite symbols of Kālī in devotional paintings or temple images have presented her as a terrible, "black" goddess and have lent themselves to negative univocal or literal interpretations. For example, one commentator on the Indian context recently commented regarding Kālī, "...she is dangerous, impetuous, sexy, violent, vengeful ... [and] seems mainly to be male fantasy written cosmically."<sup>43</sup> Such literal adoptions of Kālī's dark side have occurred also in Indian history with the Thuggees, a caste of thieves and robbers who killed their victims by strangulation in emulation of Kālī. Likewise, Bengali revolutionaries of the Twentieth Century often used Kālī's image and destructive behavior as a symbol and justification for their own violent anti-British actions. Therefore, some interpreters have found in Kālī *only* the evil, the destructive, and not their opposites (cf., Gross). This does not mean that these explicit adoptions are the most accurate religious interpretations of Kālī symbols since they all (including Gross's) arise out of essentially political and social existential contexts. To gain a religious perspective on Kālī and the use of her image as a model for behavior, a brief look at

how a renowned Kālī devotee views Kālī will be instructive. It is not because Ramakrishna is a male devotee of a feminine divine that makes his case interesting or unusual; rather, it is because Ramakrishna explores devotionally (and consciously) the many facets of Kālī as a divine symbol. And in his many modes of worshipping Kālī we learn a great deal about the implicit dimension of religious symbol that feminist revolutionary theologies ignore.

*Kālī's Servant Ramakrishna:*

Born in 1836 as the fourth of five children to a Brahmin family in Bengal, Gadadhar (Ramakrishna's given name) was said to have had several mystical experiences during his youth though it is difficult to ascribe much value to these hagiographical accounts. It does seem that more weight can be put on Ramakrishna's reported experiences once he moved to Calcutta at age sixteen to join his brother since the reporters of these events were closer to them (if not more objective in their reporting). Ramakrishna's brother was the priest at the Kālī temple at Dakshineswar and taught his younger brother the myths and rituals associated with the worship of Kālī. At the age of twenty, Ramakrishna replaced his deceased brother as the priest of this goddess shrine. An introspective youth, Ramakrishna spent most of his waking hours in the temple (or in a nearby cremation ground) seeking a direct experience of Kālī. The image before which he meditated reflected the Kālī myth recounted earlier:

The basalt image of the Mother, dressed in gorgeous gold brocade, stands on a white marble image of the prostrate body of Her Divine Consort, Siva, ... On the feet of the Goddess are, among other ornaments, anklets of gold. Her arms are decked with jewelled ornaments of gold. She wears necklaces of gold and pearls, a golden garland of human heads, and a girdle of human arms. ... She has four arms. The lower left holds a severed human head and the upper grips a blood-stained sabre. One right hand offers boons to Her children; the other allays their fears. The majesty of Her posture can hardly be described."<sup>44</sup>

Sometimes neglecting the performance of the regular daily rituals, Ramakrishna would sit in the temple before the Kālī image for hours singing the devotional songs of earlier saints such as Kamalākānta and Rāmprasād, weeping over his inability to ex-

perience the intimate union with Kālī the songs extolled. Then one day during an emotionally frustrating vigil before the image of Kālī, Ramakrishna experienced her directly:

I felt as if my heart were being squeezed like a wet towel. I was overpowered with a great restlessness and a fear that it might not be my lot to realize Her in this life. I could not bear the separation from Her any longer. Life seemed to be not worth living. Suddenly my glance fell on the sword that was kept in the Mother's temple. I determined to put an end to my life. When I jumped up like a madman and seized it, suddenly the blessed Mother revealed Herself. The buildings with their different parts, the temple, and everything else vanished from my sight leaving no trace whatsoever, and in their stead I saw a limitless, infinite, effulgent Ocean of Consciousness. ... I was panting for breath..., but within me there was a steady flow of undiluted bliss, altogether new, and I felt the presence of the Divine Mother.<sup>45</sup>

Those who came to Ramakrishna's rescue (he appeared to be unconscious) heard Ramakrishna repeating again and again, "Mother," "Mother," "Mother."

Ramakrishna became known throughout all of India during the next thirty years as the "Goddess-intoxicated" saint. His behavior was unconventional to say the least. He was found once offering food (*prasādam*) intended for Kālī to bless to a cat and was roundly attacked. He retorted that all things vibrate with the power of Kālī, the Divine Mother, hence the cat was as worthy a recipient of the specially prepared food as the image of Kālī. His logic was that the power of Kālī is as much in a cat as in the material form of the image. Such an interpretation of Kālī's power and presence reveals an implicit, relational dimension to Kālī's symbolism that Ramakrishna was to make more clear as his experiments in faith progressed.

Ramakrishna's understanding of his visionary experiences and of the Kālī image upon which they were focused was assisted by a female Tantric sage who instructed him.<sup>46</sup> She told him that the physical ecstasies he had experienced in his vision of Kālī were described by the scriptures as symptoms of the full submission called *mahābhāva* (the highest or most perfect devotional "disposition"). But Ramakrishna's devoted service to Kali as a submissive child was only one of many modes of relationship with the Divine he experienced. He adopted the role of Hanuman (the ideal servant of King Rama) as a servant would before his or her master (*dāśya*-

*bhāva*). He became for weeks on end a doting mother as he cared for a small image of Rama in the parent-child disposition (*vātasalya-bhāva*). He dressed and acted like a woman as he adopted the attitude of the *gopīs* (cowherding women lovers of Kṛṣṇa) as he experienced union with Kṛṣṇa (*mādhurya-bhāva*). But in the end, it was as a child before the transcendent Mother Kālī to which all other relationships were subordinated, even that with the supreme, impersonal Brahman:

When I think of the Supreme Being as inactive...I call Him Brahman or Puruṣa, the Impersonal God. When I think of Him [sic] as active-creating, preserving, and destroying—I call Him Śakti or Māyā or Prakṛiti, the personal God. But the distinctions between them does not mean a difference. The Personal and the Impersonal are the same thing, like milk and its whiteness, the diamond and its lustre, the snake and its wriggling motion. ... The Divine Mother and Brahman are one.<sup>47</sup>

Ramakrishna insisted that to know God exists is simply knowledge, but to know Him/Her as a friend, master, beloved, servant or child is “true knowledge” (*viññāna*).<sup>48</sup> For Ramakrishna, Kālī is the Divine Mother who *is* intoxicated and mad as she creates and preserves and destroys the world. She assumes that posture, however, only to bring all devotees (male and female) to a recognition of the impermanence of this transitory world. In commenting on this devotional view of Kālī which Ramakrishna (and Rāmaprasād) came to experience, David Kinsley says that the character of Kālī we see in myth and image may be understood *overall* as benign:

Her raised and bloodied sword suggests the death of ignorance, her disheveled hair suggests the freedom of release, and her girdle of severed arms may suggest the end of grasping. As death or the mistress of death she grants to him who sees truly the ultimate boon of unconditioned freedom, release from the cycle of *saṃsāra*, release from pain, sorrow, and not-knowing. Her two right hands, the upper making the *mudrā* of ‘fear not’ and the lower making the *mudrā* of granting boons, convey that death is only the passing away of the non-essential and the gateway to ultimate freedom.<sup>49</sup>

If it can be argued that the Thuggees and the twentieth century revolutionaries take only the symbols of Kālī’s dark, left side (sword and bloody head) literally as their model for social roles or political actions, then it is the case that Ramakrishna and other Kālī devotees have found implicit, spiritual meanings and relationships

directed by her right side as they act out a divinely inspired devotional madness as her children. Far from a model of *combining* oppositions (e.g., Gross), Kālī can confront her children as a Mother who helps them *overcome all* models and distinctions.

*Conclusion: Goddess as Sign or Symbol:*

As we have seen, students of religion agree that symbols do have literal or *explicit* references and, hence, cognitive values or meanings which can be shared by persons giving assent to those symbols. This is the essential point made by Geertz when he calls symbols vehicles for conceptions and by feminist theologians who ascribe negative or positive values to religious symbols based on their gender. Robert Ellwood agrees that religious symbols may be viewed archetypically as “models for” human roles and behaviour in a way that “fixes” roles by gender stereotyping:

...men and women themselves easily become symbols, becoming The Man and The Woman to each other and even to themselves. This is nowhere more the case than in religion, for religion is rightly the first and final home of archetype and symbol. Knowing archetype and symbol to be bright windows elucidating God and his ways (themes too vast for ordinary language), religionists sometimes forget that even what seems an angel of light can conceal an enslaving demon.<sup>50</sup>

What our brief analysis and historical example have corroborated is what historians have all along known, that *even on the explicit level*, primary religious symbols are usually multivocal.<sup>51</sup> Consequently, for a complex image such as Kālī's, various and even conflicting literal interpretations may abound. The Thuggees and political revolutionaries can pay attention only to the destructive dimension of Kālī's image (the left side's sword and bloody head), while notable devotees (Rāmprasād and Ramakrishna) of this goddess may insist that the benevolent aspects of the goddess (her protection and beneficence marked by her two right hands' gestures) mediate and qualify the destructive ones. Therefore, for Ramakrishna, Kālī's destructive might is understood to be directed at evil forces, recalcitrant devotees, and those who fail to see the wisdom in her madness. Then again, Gross finds in Kālī's image a balance of oppositions which glorifies feminine attributes and gives women a role model (psychologically, if not socially understood).

Diversity of opinion about the meaning of religious symbols and images is not uncommon when they are understood primarily (or only) as explicit models of sacred realities to be emulated. Furthermore, such interpretations usually reflect social or political realities and interests. Religious institutions have often fallen into this snare as is evident in the use of Jesus and his cross to justify the medieval crusades, the Spanish inquisition, contemporary revolutionary violence in South America (all of which have affected men and women), and the institutional subordination of women to men throughout Christian history. Ironically, it would seem that those who would save women from such politically or socially motivated literal interpretations of religious symbols, commit the very same mistake in offering the Goddess as the explicit embodiment of feminine roles and/or attributes. They reduce religious symbols to theological “signs” or constructs which provide for human roles socially and psychologically understood.

For example, Gross’s re-imaging is just that—a human construction or calculated projection that *is* a theological “signifier” (i.e., “vehicle for conception”) but not a fully religious one—even in Geertz’s understanding—until it is codified and made “uniquely realistic” by ritual or community participation. Gross’ Goddess can’t become a religious symbol in a scholar’s study because, even for Geertz, moods and motivations that experientially verify the symbols of a religious system are created in ritual and social activities which *complete* the symbolic circle. Thus Gross’ Goddess remains a “conceptual imagining” (however powerfully motivating) until or unless she can claim experience of that goddess as a divine other (*ganz ander*).

What Ramakrishna’s devotion teaches us about religious symbols is that they can *evoke* the realities to which they point precisely because they have an intuitive, *implicit* level of meaning which is *relational*.<sup>52</sup> Though Ramakrishna stood before a seemingly terrifying image of a mad and violent goddess, he experienced her to be a loving mother just when he could no longer tolerate separation from her. Not only did Kālī’s right hand gestures say to Ramakrishna, “Fear not; I will protect and sustain you,” his vision of Kālī confirmed that message. Regardless of the source of that experience (i.e., unconscious projection, actual experience of Kali, etc.) it is

clear that the image of Kālī as well as those of Ramā and Kṛṣṇa became for Ramakrishna *vehicles for relationships*, not just conceptions within a symbol system. He did not simply re-conceive Kālī, Ramakrishna experienced her presence.

Note that all of the *bhāvas* or “devotional dispositions” which Ramakrishna assumed are *relational* both explicitly (i.e. literally) and implicitly (i.e., experientially). Observe also that their explicit gender requirements (e.g., to become a mother or a submissive female lover) can be divorced from the gender of the devotee. Thus men can act as mothers and women can become the cowherd friends of Kṛṣṇa, etc. Hence, it is through the implicit and transformational function of symbols that religious sentiments and attitudes are conveyed and gender references often transcended.

It is precisely the devotional level of interpretation of symbols which Christ and Plaskow appear to decry as “spiritualization.”<sup>53</sup> But to deny religious symbols their power to transform a person’s material or sexual orientation to the world is to reduce them to political, social, or psychological representations alone. For Ramakrishna, to become a mother or woman lover was not simply to adopt a new sexual role, but to enter various new relationships with Kālī which would enhance his devotion.

To recognize the dynamic, relational function of symbol is to be able to account for the complexity of religious symbols wherein a gender image (e.g., Kālī or Jesus) used institutionally or socially as an explicit *sign* by some may be for others a religious/ethical/spiritual *symbol* for men and women alike. With such a relational understanding of Jesus as symbol, Mother Teresa can say when asked how she has sustained her work with dying and outcaste patients in Calcutta’s slums, “I see Jesus in every human being.”<sup>54</sup> It is not the male Jesus, but a divine person of self-giving love to whom Sister Teresa feels *related*. Like Christina of Markyate and Julian of Norwich, Sister Teresa feels herself *empowered* by Jesus, not belittled or subordinated.<sup>55</sup> Is it surprising that to write a history of women’s positive experiences of the Jesus model (or the Kali image) one would have to look more often at the common spirituality of unnamed masses and the spiritual elites rather than at institutional history or its formal devotional practice?

One conclusion which seems inescapable is that religious symbols

may be, and often are, truncated by being reduced to an explicit gender reference, and that as such they become only a theological, social or psychological archetype or sign.<sup>56</sup> A second conclusion which seems equally obvious is that the *same* symbol's explicit multivocality and interpretations may be subordinated to dynamic, implicit, relational ones.<sup>57</sup> This certainly is the case with Kālī's sexuality for many of her devotees, both male and female. That is, Kālī finally transcends her own explicit sexuality as a transcendent, sacred reality just as her devotees will shed their sexuality at death. Kālī's gender may be understood (as may Jesus') as an incarnate mask which some devotees see behind: "They saw her external appearance as a mask and by persistently approaching her as children, they succeeded in making her take off that mask."<sup>58</sup>

As an historian of religion I have questioned a primary assumption and assertion of certain feminist theological debates (and the definition of symbol as "vehicle for conception" upon which they rest) concerning the gender correspondence of religious symbols without really entering the primary debate (i.e., whether the Goddess *is* a theological solution). I realize that Goddess symbols evoke strong emotions as well as psychological and social "models for" women. However, what I have tried to suggest is that the implicit, religious dimension of deity symbols intend to engender a dynamic, transformative *relationship with* the divine referent, and that the case of Ramakrishna and Kālī shows us that gender need not be the critical factor in such a religious experience and relationship. To fail to put discussions of Goddess "re-imagining" in the broader consideration of the theoretical assumptions upon which they rest can lead to a skewed statement of the theological problem (male-god) as well as the solution (female-goddess). Most importantly, such a goddess solution may actually promote the very type of limited and distorted uses of symbols which have led to legitimate feminist outcries in the first place.

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<sup>1</sup> Carl G. Jung, *Psychological Types* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1946 [1921]), p. 602.

<sup>2</sup> For a full appreciation of this *maṇḍala* symbol in dreams Jung analyzed, see C.

G. Jung, *Psychology & Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969 [1939]), pp. 40-77.

<sup>3</sup> *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>6</sup> "The Symbol Gives Rise to Thought," in *Ways of Understanding Religion*, edited by Walter H. Capps (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 313. For a more detailed description of Ricoeur's understanding of symbol, see his *The Symbolism of Evil* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1967) and *Interpretation Theory: Discourses in the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian Press, 1976).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 315.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 314.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> "Religion as a Cultural System," in *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion*, edited by Michael Banton (London: Tavistock Publications), pp. 1-46.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>13</sup> My personal interest in feminine theology in general and in the issue of gender symbolism in particular was sparked by Judith Plaskow. After her lecture, "Woman as Body," on April 9, 1979 to the Oberlin College community, I discussed with her a statement she had made; namely, "Jesus cannot serve as a salvation model for women." It was in that initial discussion and again in a more recent conversation (Oct. 9, 1981) with Prof. Plaskow that the impetus for this essay was spawned and nourished. However, in this essay I have not pursued the thought of Plaskow since she is not a proponent of the Goddess solution as described later in this essay.

<sup>14</sup> "Some Observations on Recent Studies of Zen," in *Studies in Mysticism and Religion* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1967), pp. 317-335 (p. 317).

<sup>15</sup> "Religion New and Not So New," a review article in *NVMEN: International Review for the History of Religions*, Vol. XXVII, Fasc. 1, June 1980, pp. 155-65 (p. 155).

<sup>16</sup> "Women....And Other....Beasts or 'Why Can't a Woman Be More Like a Man?'," a review article in *NVMEN...*, Vol. XXIX, Fasc. 1, July 1982, pp. 123-31 (pp. 123 & 125).

<sup>17</sup> For a detailed look at the Mother Goddess (Magna Mater) traditions throughout the world, and their consistent link with male aspects of culture and the male power structure, see: E. O. James, *The Cult of the Mother-Goddess* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1959).

<sup>18</sup> *The Christian Century*, Sept. 10-17, 1980, pp. 842-47. Ruether challenges the Goddess solutions of the "countercultural" or radical feminists such as Starhawk, Z.E. Budapest, Carol Christ, and Naomi Goldenberg on the grounds of bad historical research, ambiguous self-image models, self-defeating gender stereotypes, and wrong-headed deity stereotypes. Ruether's essay shows the rather different issues and tact this essay would have needed to include had its intention been to debate the Goddess solution theologically or with counter-historical examples in a fully comparative way. Readers who wish to explore the theological debate on this issue should read the selections entitled "What the Goddess Means to Women" and "Are Goddesses and Matriarchies Merely Figments of Feminist Imagination?" in the anthology, *The Politics of Women's Spirituality*, edited by Charlene Spretnak (New York: Anchor Books, 1982).

<sup>19</sup> "God and the Theologians," *Against Self-Images of the Age* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978), p. 25. I thank my colleague Gordon Michalson for first alerting me to this essay.

<sup>20</sup> *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), p. 13.

<sup>21</sup> "The Qualitative Leap Beyond Patriarchal Religion," *Quest*, Vol. I, 1974, as quoted in Elizabeth Fiorenza, "Women in the Early Christian Movement," *Womanspirit Rising*, edited by Carol Christ and Judith Plaskow (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), p. 137.

<sup>22</sup> "Introduction," *Womanspirit Rising*, p. 23.

<sup>23</sup> Christ and Plaskow (*Ibid.*, pp. 10-11) make a distinction between "revolutionaries" and "reformists" in feminist theological studies. On the one hand, revolutionaries are said to share in common complete rejection of patriarchal religious language and/or traditions but not necessarily constructive alternatives. Christ and Plaskow list among the revolutionaries Mary Daly (e.g., *Beyond God the Father...*, and *Gyn-Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism* [Boston: Beacon Press, 1979]), Merlin Stone (e.g., *When God Was a Woman* [New York: Dial Press, 1976]), and Christ herself (e.g., "Spiritual Quest and Women's Experience," *Womanspirit Rising*, pp. 228-45, and "Why Women Need the Goddess: Phenomenological, Psychological, and Political Reflections," *Ibid.*, pp. 273-87). It should not be surprising that it is the revolutionaries (*Womanspirit Rising*, p. 10) who stress the identity of divine image and human social and psychological adoptions of those images and who, therefore, often suggest the Goddess as a theological solution. On the other hand, the reformists often dwell on other dimensions of Jewish or Christian traditions than the symbolic as they "reread" the ancient scriptures (e.g., Phyllis Trible, "Eve and Adam: Genesis 2-3 Reread," *Womanspirit Rising*, pp. 74-83) or "rediscover" positive roles for women in the historical accounts (e.g., Fiorenza, "Women in the Early Christian Movement"). Therefore, this essay is primarily concerned with the arguments of the revolutionaries or radicals which make the symbol/role identification of male God/man (and for some, female Goddess/woman) a major reason for their rejection of patriarchal religious traditions.

<sup>24</sup> "Why Women Need the Goddess," p. 275.

<sup>25</sup> *Women Priests in the Catholic Church?* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1973) as quoted in Rita M. Gross, "Hindu Female Deities as a Resource for the Contemporary Rediscovery of the Goddess," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, XLVI: 3, September 1978), p. 270.

<sup>26</sup> In spite of my own appreciation for Geertz's analysis of symbols as "models for" human behavior (see, Roy C. Amore and Larry D. Shinn, *Lustful Maidens and Ascetic Kings: Buddhist and Hindu Stories of Life* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1981]), it is clear that it is the ethical tales adapted from fables and folktales and *not primary religious myths* which most often provide a culture's role models. Religious myths and symbols which are central to a religion's thought and practice are often ambiguous at best as explicit gender role-models. For example, see Wendy O'Flaherty's excellent discussion of "sexual fluids" symbols (e.g., blood, semen, milk) and the blurring of gender lines that often occur in the Indian mythological context, in her book, *Women, Androgynes, and Other Mythical Beasts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), especially pp. 53-61. A second example is Caroline Bynum's superb historical study of selected medieval Christian perceptions of Jesus as a complex symbol and model in *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982). Bynum's book

pushes its readers to consider gender issues in their own historical context and avoids any simplistic assumptions regarding the role and function of gender correspondence and difference in relationships between deity and devotee.

<sup>27</sup> (Boston: Beacon Press, 1977).

<sup>28</sup> See in particular *Gyn-Ecology*.

<sup>29</sup> "Why Women Need the Goddess," p. 286.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 284.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 279.

<sup>32</sup> "Hindu Female Deities," p. 271.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 272.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 275.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 277. What makes the historian of religion uneasy with selective reconstructions of symbolic imagery taken out of historical context such as Gross offers here in the Indian Magna Mater, is that all of the attributes named here are obvious and well-known in a variety of goddess contexts *except* how they may liberate women socially and politically. The historical record of the goddess symbol is exactly the opposite. For example, see: Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati, *The High-Caste Hindu Woman* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1901); Lizelle Raymond, *My Life With a Brahmin Family* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1958); and Manisha Roy, *Bengali Women* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1975). Spanning nearly a century in scope, these three books point to a male-dominated Indian society in which both male and female deities support the status quo socially and politically. Such an historical observation about the very culture and set of goddesses Gross uses to "reimage" a Goddess *for* women should cause one to question whether the theological enterprise is the place to start rectifying injustices for women. Geertz himself asserts that religious symbols reflect (i.e., are "models of") as much as they shape (i.e., are "models for") their culture. Consequently, Gross' reimagined Goddess taken totally out of historical and cultural context is likely to do neither.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 280.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 288.

<sup>38</sup> *Womanspirit Rising*, p. 11.

<sup>39</sup> *The Devī-Māhātmyam*, trans. By Swami Jagadisvarananda (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math. 1969). This text contains the full Devī-Durgā-Kālī myth and occurs first in literary form as chapters 81-93 of the *Mārkaṇḍya Purāṇa* but is treated as a separate scripture by Kālī devotees. The Sanskrit and English texts published by the Sri Ramakrishna Math represents such a separate treatment of the Kālī story.

<sup>40</sup> *The Sword and the Flute: Kālī and Kṛṣṇa, Dark Visions of the Terrible and the Sublime in Hindu Mythology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120. Not only are sexual symbols ambivalent but so too are the personalities of most Magna Maters as O'Flaherty's and E. O. James's studies show.

<sup>43</sup> Denise Larder Carmody, *Women and World Religions* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979), p. 59.

<sup>44</sup> *Ramakrishna: Prophet of New India (Abridged from the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna)*, trans. by Swami Nidhulananda (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1942), p. 6.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>46</sup> For a provocative analysis of the role played by the female Tantric ascetic in Ramakrishna's own spiritual quest, see Walter Neevel's "The Transformation of

Śrī Ramakrishna," *Hinduism: New Essays in the History of Religions*, edited by Bardwell Smith (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), pp. 53-97.

<sup>47</sup> Nikhilananda, *Ramakrishna*, p. 26.

<sup>48</sup> Neevel, "The Transformation of Śrī Ramakrishna," p. 90.

<sup>49</sup> *The Sword and the Flute*, p. 143. The student of Indian religions will recognize in Kali a common expression of the Indian assertion that the female dimension of the divine (and all "reality") is the active, powerful, and potent aspect (though also linked to the earth's fecundity) which is just the opposite of most East Asian theological assumptions and understandings (e.g., Chinese Yin/Yang) where it is the masculine dimension of the Divine that is the active principle or power.

<sup>50</sup> "A Return to Father Knows Best," *Male and Female: Christian Approaches to Sexuality*, edited by Ruth T. Barnhouse and Urban T. Holmes (New York: Seabury Press, 1976), pp. 106-07.

<sup>51</sup> For example, Paul Ricoeur in *Interpretation Theory* (p. 64) argues that since symbols are rooted in metaphors, they necessarily must be polysemic.

<sup>52</sup> In an earlier book (*Two Sacred Worlds: Experience and Structure in the World's Religions* [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1977]) I have given a fuller discussion of the implicit and explicit functions of symbols and their relation to myths from which they arise and to which they point. Both there and here I am indebted to Ricoeur's analysis of symbols (though I obviously depart from his more strictly linguistic understanding) and also to that of Mircea Eliade. Both in *Myth and Reality* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), pp. 1-20 and in *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (New York: Meridian Books, 1958), pp. 445-48, Eliade argues that religious symbols transform awareness and provide a sense of relationship to the Divine. Consequently, for Eliade, symbols are properly understood as reflections of a hierophany (i.e., encounter with transcendent power) or may in themselves constitute such a "revelation." With reference to Ramakrishna's attitude toward women in light of his faith in Kālī and his more explicit and literal understanding of her imagery see Arvind Sharma, "Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahansa: A Study in a Mystic's Attitude Toward Women," *Beyond Androcentrism: New Essays on Women and Religion*, edited by Rita Gross (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977), 115-124.

<sup>53</sup> *Womanspirit Rising*, p. 5.

<sup>54</sup> Khushwant Singh, "Mother Teresa," *Gurus, Godmen, and Good People* (Bombay: Orient Longman Ltd. 1975), p. 119.

<sup>55</sup> See Eleanor McLaughlin, "The Christian Past: Does it Hold a Future for Women?" *Womanspirit Rising*, pp. 93-106.

<sup>56</sup> For a good description of how a literal interpretation and emulation of divine mythic models cause ill effects for upper class Bengali women, see Roy's *Bengali Women*. Here, for example, the erotic imagery of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are taken as explicit role-models for human actions and expectations in the marriage context, and as such, provide acute disillusionment. (See also f.n. 35.)

<sup>57</sup> A fruitful context besides that of Ramakrishna's in which one can explore the devotional utilization and transcendence of gender images and roles is that of Mīrābāī, a sixteenth century devotee of Kṛṣṇa. For example, see S. M. Pandey's "Mīrābāī and Her Contributions to the Bhakti Movement," *History of Religions*, Vol. 5:1, 1965, pp. 54-73; and *The Devotional Poems of Mīrābāī*, trans. by Shreeprakash Kurl (Calcutta: The Writers Workshop, 1973).

<sup>58</sup> Kinsley, *The Sword and The Flute*, p. 125.

## PERSONALITY STRUCTURE AND RESPONSE TO ADVERSITY IN EARLY CHRISTIAN HAGIOGRAPHY

R. F. NEWBOLD

“Greater danger lies not in attacks from outside, but from within ourselves. Inside us is the adversary, inside us is the author of error, inside us I say, closed up within our very selves... it proceeds not from nature but from our own wills.” Thus observed St. Ambrose (*Expositio in Psalmum* 118, 4.22). The need to guard against the enemy within, to exercise the will vigilantly to control impulses, is a characteristic theme in the exhortations of Ambrose and his contemporaries. The penalties of failure to exercise unsleeping restraint over aggressive and harmful impulses provided the moral of many a cautionary tale. The soul or heart of the individual might remain ultimately secure and invulnerable whatever happens but the expression of its essential virtue could be thwarted by a vitiated will: its strength could be undermined by vices which beset its abode. In Prudentius’ *Psychomachia*, where the battle is fought within the body, the evil passions have to be first expelled before a secure dwelling for the soul can be built. As Prudentius puts it, “We must keep watch, wearing the armour of faithful hearts. We must concentrate our strength at the centre and liberate every part of the body which is captive and enslaved to foul passion” (*Psych.* 52-5), Christ is the one who leads the forces of the individual soul against the enemies that beset it. The body itself may be fragile but a pure, peaceful and unified core radiates sufficient power to protect it.<sup>1</sup> An angry, impure, turbulent heart, however, may invite rejection by God: those with “bad hearts” should not participate in ceremonies of worship (*Psych.* 772-87). Pretentious or deceitful coverings are attributes of Prudentius’ Vices. Preferably, the coverings of the body (skin or clothing) and the movement of the body should reveal and reflect the beauty of the pure heart, the soul that glows with God’s presence. Besides, all-seeing God knows the state of the individual heart. Men and animals too can sense inner dispositions (*Psych.* 788-92). Gait can betray a potential heretic.

"The attitude of the mind is seen in the bodily posture .... Bodily movements are like the utterances of the soul."<sup>2</sup> Satan and his victim-seeking demons could also ascertain the state of the heart. They were notorious for using disguises in their insidious attacks. The virtuous on the contrary eschewed all concealment. Prudentius emphasises that, after victory over the Vices, the Virtues avoid all recesses and hiding places: their tents stand open, their flaps drawn back, lest anyone take advantage of secrecy to relax their vigilance (*Psych.* 741-5). Exposure is not feared. The inside is as the outside.

Among the various ways in which personality structure can be contrasted is "encapsulated" versus "amoebic".<sup>3</sup> In the case of the encapsulated personality, personal identity is felt to have a structure that is strongly bounded and clearly demarcated from its surrounding field or environment. From this secure and definite base, the individual can influence the world rather than be influenced by it. The sense of self therefore tends to be field independent. In the case of the amoebic personality, a greater sense of fusion with the environment is experienced and there is less certainty about where identity begins and ends. The sense of self tends to be field dependent. The encapsulated and amoebic modes of perceiving the world and organising the self are not mutually exclusive opposites but involve different emphases. Where one mode is predominant, a compensatory drive to achieve some of the qualities of the other exists. Thus fantasies or ideals of exposing one's inner qualities to the rest of the world counteract the otherwise imprisoning and confining sense of encapsulated identity: and a wish for secure and stable areas in which identity can be based and protected is entertained by the amoebic personality to counter feelings of dissolution and a sense of being unable to counteract the pressure of the environment.

The personality structure assumed (and to some extent enjoyed) by the likes of Ambrose and Prudentius is clearly an encapsulated one. Like the amoebic, this personality structure has an identifiable and characteristic set of defence mechanisms and methods of operating. It opts to wrestle with the problem of guilt and the anxieties that revolve around the guilt axis rather than those that revolve around the shame axis.

Shame and guilt are difficult personality characteristics to discuss

and disentangle because they can alternate with, reinforce and conceal one another. Shame is not wholly external in its orientation nor is guilt wholly internal. A sense of guilt can be awakened and reinforced by external opinion, and shameful acts or feelings may be unknown to outsiders but are subject to the scrutiny and scorn of the internal observer. Individuals in so-called shame cultures are fully capable of experiencing guilt for committing a crime, and individuals in "guilt cultures" may experience shame as well as guilt for a transgression.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless one way of distinguishing guilt and shame is to regard the former as awareness of transgressing a limit, of violating a more or less internalised taboo, while shame is characterised by a sense of inadequacy, by failure to live up to a standard or ideal, whether that goal is sanctioned by mainstream society or set by oneself or a minority group. In the case of guilt, there is a sense of wrong *doing*: the self is active: it has exercised will and power and decision in violating a taboo or harming an external object or person in thought or deed: the victim may no longer be intact but the perpetrator is. What is chiefly feared is punishment. The guilty party often has it in his power to make restitution. He can feel pity and show concern, regret, remorse and, in general, virtue. Whether restitution is voluntary, the paying of the debt via confession and/or atonement (punishment, suffering, self-denial, asceticism, sacrifice) expiates the crime and confers a certain release. Guilt is both externally oriented and self-contained in that it seeks to come to an accommodation with a set of taboos, laws, rules formulated by others (notably parents) and to restrain forbidden impulses. In return the guilt-ridden person gains a sense of autonomy and encapsulation. He gains a secure base of operations within and from which to influence and placate external forces; and, if necessary, he can with righteous indignation punish the transgressions of others.<sup>5</sup>

In the experience of shame there is a sense of disappointment, inferiority and wrong *being*: the self is passive: it has failed and been shown to be inadequate and helpless, in the eyes of the self or others, through factors beyond its control, such as lack of money, beauty, skill, or intelligence. The very triviality of some occasions of shame can intensify shame feelings. Shame diminishes the sense of self. It makes us feel small when public, and wish that we could

hide. It is more serious and enduring than embarrassment, which is a loss of poise rather than a blow to self-esteem. Shame involves an unexpected stripping away, a surprise invasion, an incongruity. What is chiefly feared is a crack in the facade and exposure—to the self or others—of unsuspected weakness, and consequent abandonment or ostracism. Denial, concealment, reaffirmation of worth, displays of pseudostrength (“impotent rage”), self-glorification, revenge and accumulation of wealth, status and prestige are some of the characteristic defences. If the boundaries of the shame-sensitive self are thus more spatially variable, they are also more permeable, because shame and embarrassment can empathetically be felt on behalf of others, particularly if one is closely identified with them (e.g. relatives) and because a despising other can be felt as if it were a despising self. Experience is more amoebic, the distinction between self and surround is less clear. Shame-anxiety seeks to establish boundaries beyond which no-one may intrude: guilt-anxiety establishes limits beyond which one may not step and threaten the integrity of others. Because shame is more concerned with (often unattainable and remote) ideals rather than clear moral limits and because it is more difficult to come to a firm agreement with an internal observer whose expectations may steadily increase, shame and the anxiety it involves is a more difficult demon to exorcise than guilt-anxiety. Also, guilt feelings are more communicable. They have a better chance of being articulated by the wrong doer and understood by the judge in the light of a common ethical code. Shame feelings, especially when they seem petty or irrational in their origin, are less easily and less safely shared.<sup>6</sup> Revenge may offer a catharsis but may also involve guilt-laden crimes. Finally, there are many variants of shame feelings. Guilt feelings are monotonic and, to that extent, more bearable.

Field independent personalities, then, are both more ready to defend the self in the field (i.e. less ready to accept the negative judgments of others and their efforts to shame) and more concerned with guilt, fault, responsibility, being punished; more focussed on the society's rules; and more concerned with who is at fault. There is a tendency to project forbidden impulses onto the clearly separate others. Paranoia is the characteristic personality disorder. Field dependent personalities are more susceptible to the shaming efforts

of others and are more concerned about embarrassment and exposure of private details. They are more self-conscious, more focussed on the relationship between self and inner observer and more prone to depression.<sup>7</sup>

That pre-reformation Christianity tended to breed guilt-ridden rather than shame-driven personalities is no startling revelation but just why anxieties and preoccupations came to evolve so clearly around a guilt rather than a shame axis by, say, the fourth century A.D. is a complex issue that permits many approaches. Our approach concentrates upon exploring the link between the concepts of guilt, field independence and encapsulation, and shame, field dependence and amoebic merging. Comparing the two syndromes illuminates both, and offers insight into the personality structure and response to adversity of the early Christian ideal personality. This comparison can be effectively pursued by briefly examining two peoples whose behaviour and ideology furnishes a sharp and relevant contrast. Consequently, we may get a clearer idea of what Christians were embracing and rejecting, and why.

The Hopi are a Pueblo Indian tribe living in Arizona.<sup>8</sup> The harshness of their semi-desert environment bred a parsimonious lifestyle and contributed to the development of a modal personality that stresses cooperation and impulse control, and frowns on argument, overt aggression and boasting. The philosophy by which the Hopi live is one that assumes they have great power, for good or ill, to influence the world. Essential is the pure-thinking, good heart which prevents harmful thoughts (harmful to self or to others) from arising or vigilantly prevents them from finding expression if they do. Discipline of thoughts and feelings, vigilance and the demonstration of strength, stamina, skill and speed are highly valued. The ideal body is both a strong container of impulse and a surface on and through which fine inner qualities can be affirmed. It is not, primarily, a screen against intrusion, external threat or scrutiny.<sup>9</sup> From within character is moulded and the boundaries of the self maintained. Effectiveness depends on continuous conscious self-control and attention to the all-seeing supernatural. "Although an individual receives help and guidance from his Guardian Spirit, such help is never a permanent or established thing. Support in one's attempts to preserve a good-heart depends on the individual's

constant awareness of the efforts which he alone must make. Lack of control over one's negative thoughts and emotions results in being 'dropped' by the spirit guide.'<sup>10</sup>

External forms are not only unimportant, they may actually hinder development or the manifestation of the good heart. One of their folk tales praises a poor boy for his swiftness and skill, and remarks: "He never wore much clothing, which accounted for his strength". It is evil-hearted trouble makers who wear masks and disguises. Survival when poor, unclothed, abandoned or isolated is proof of inner strength and a good heart. The harmony of the society and the cosmos is nurtured by the harmonious heart of the individual. Consequently, a man who has been thinking bad thoughts lately may absent himself from communal ceremonies that aim to promote cosmic harmony. Offices and honours are not sought, even actively avoided, and the possession of special powers constantly denied.<sup>11</sup> Folk tales emphasise punishment. Illness is seen as a heart impurity.<sup>12</sup>

If the Hopi exemplify a remorse or guilt culture dominated by encapsulated personalities, how does a culture dominated by amoebic personalities manifest? The Kwakiutl are a north-west American Indian tribe, living mainly on Vancouver Island, off British Columbia.<sup>13</sup> The climate is mild, the land forested, and the sea as rich in sources of food as the land. The Kwakiutl world-view is characterised by a sense of teeming abundance, by fluidity and porosity, and by a need to arrest or manipulate the flux in order to provide a sense of mastery and secure self-identity. All objects animate or inanimate, tend to be conceived of as having heads and tails, mouths and anuses, and to be channels for incorporating, vomiting, and defaecating. In their folk lore, there is a preoccupation with orifices,<sup>14</sup> the vulnerability of imperfect concealment and enclosure, the weakness and decomposition of surfaces, and fantasies of security from fear or shame available from disguise, impermeable barriers, transformation and self-extension. Imagining transformation into, say, a bird or bear, conceals the self and its motives, and misleads others. Seeking fame, displaying superiority and boasting of achievement are forms of self-extension. Possessions, clothing, crests and masks are valued partly because they help to win admiration and divert scrutiny from the identity within

and its inadequacies. Self-worth is measured by external evidence. "This is the weight of my name", a Kwakiutl would say, pointing to a pile of his blankets. Anxieties centre around intrusion of subjugation from outside. Such threats are countered (i) by the elaboration and the beautification of surface barriers; (ii) by incorporation and self-extension which reduces the area of the environment without and increases that which is within and under immediate control; (iii) by theriomorphic fantasies, whereby one can display strength, dive deep underwater or fly high in the sky and from there survey and demonstrate literal superiority over rivals; and (iv) by plugging orifices and filling gaps. The Kwakiutl value cunning rather than courage.<sup>15</sup> Shame, ridicule, humiliation and the resulting sense of exposure and ostracism are to be avoided at all costs. Regressive responses include hiding, sulking, depression, even suicide. Active efforts to achieve catharsis revolve round plotting and exacting revenge on the source of the shame. Even death can be regarded as a defeat or an insult that requires those (imagined to be) responsible to be humiliated in turn, i.e. killed.<sup>16</sup> Physical deformations and sores on the skin are a keen source of shame. There are frequent references in Kwakiutl folk tales to people rubbing, bathing, painting and massaging their bodies, not only to purify or beautify them, but for the firmer sense of personal boundedness such experience provides. Basically, mastery of others remains the goal of behaviour and the self is felt to be constantly at the mercy of alien, potentially shaming forces.

Analysis of reactions to adversity by the subjects of eight hagiographies provide some concrete and quantitative evidence for the nature of the ideal Christian personality in late antiquity. The subjects lived most of their lives in the 4th and/or 5th centuries and the authors are largely contemporaneous: Anthony (Athanasius), Paul, Hilarion and Malchus (Jerome), Martin (Sulpicius Severus), Ambrose (Paulinus), Severinus (Eugippius) and Daniel Stylites (author unknown). The data collected for analysis concerned clear and immediate reactions in word or deed to any specific and explicitly stated (by the author) threat or adverse influence upon the holy man's state of well-being, peace of mind or security. The source of the threat or disturbance had to be "external", and be perceived as such by the subject in the clear opinion of the author.

The external stimuli fell into four main categories: God, fate, Christ; nature (river, fire, animal, plant etc.); humans (including the death, illness, unhappiness, obstinacy etc. thereof); magic (demon, Devil, angel, apparition). These stimuli could affect the subject singly or in combination. "Internal" pressures such as bodily pain, appetite, health and the more speculative (rarely articulated by the authors) factors, such as law, moral code, social and institutional pressure for conformity, economic circumstances, were excluded. So were imaginary (anticipated but not eventuating) fears and threats. Examples of "adversity" and reactions thereto include: Ambrose having people tortured when the population of Milan want to make him bishop (*Amb.* 3.6); Paul barring the door when Anthony comes to visit him (*Paul* 9); Anthony making a sign of the cross when a demon appears to him (*Ant.* 53); Martin trusting in God to give him the necessary strength to hold up a pine tree when it fell on him (*Mart.* 13); Severinus obeying God's command to return to town instead of his cell (*Sev.* 4.6); and Daniel lecturing dissident monks who have been seduced by the Devil (*Dan.* 92). In the eight biographies there were 156 instances of negative external influence. The responses made by the subjects can be grouped as follows:

prayer, invocation for divine aid	27
order, warn others (men, demons, nature) to do something or be- have in some way	22
stand fast, unmoved, unafraid; affirm faith (21) + offer to demon- strate courage (1)	22
withdraw from company, bar people from presence	18
confront, intervene or argue with power, authority	14
weep, sigh (12) + sorrow, lament (2)	14
rebuke, protest, denounce, blame (9) + expose vice (1)	10
gesture	7
thank, praise God; utter Christ's name	7
reject gift, honour, post, comfort (6) + refuse to display power (1)	7
sing, smile	6
accede to human request	5
spontaneously bestow favour; offer help, cheer others up	5

heal, revive	4
fast, vigil	4
obey God or dream warning	3
punish self (2) + offer self for punishment (1)	3
miscellaneous: repent (1), work (1), excuse self before authority (1), work miracles (2)	5
Total	183

The number of responses exceeds the number of adverse situations because often a threat evokes several responses. There were seven instances where no response is mentioned by the author.

In adversity, saints act, stand their ground, discipline themselves and exhibit independence from the field. They do not seek approval, affirmation or attention from anyone except God. They might weep, but do not become downhearted and seek to deny depression or a sense of inferiority by manic behaviour or deceit. They do good works and speak out when occasion demands, whether the offenders be demons or humans. A quality of Hilarion was that he was “stern in rebuke” (*Hil.* 3).

However, material dealing with response to adversity comprises only a fraction of the evidence within the eight lives. Much else conforms to the philosophy outlined in the opening paragraph of this article. Praise of endurance and references to fasts, vigils, standing firm and general intensification of self-discipline are far more numerous than the above table suggests. Severinus constantly orders people, when threatened by sickness, crop failure or barbarian attack, to discipline themselves by fasts, vigils and good works.<sup>17</sup> Such atonement might attract divine aid. Certainly it was considered to raise morale and strengthen the spirit: people were “protected against the enemy by the armour of pious fasting” (*Sev.* 25.3). Good thoughts fortify the soul (*Ant.* 42), while abstinence and restraint hardens the body (*Hil.* 4; *Sev.* 4.10). And demons were baffled by the power thus generated.<sup>18</sup> It was lack of vigilance that ruined Judas (*Ant.* 42) and lack of impulse control that destroyed Lot’s wife (*Ant.* 20; *Sev.* 9.5). Bombast, honours, florid language and fine clothing are disparaged.<sup>19</sup> Deceit, display and disguise attract demons who use just these devices to trap and invade the heart.<sup>20</sup> Relying on external barriers such as closed doors

to exclude demons is ineffective (*Ant.* 28). The pure heart penetrates all disguises.<sup>21</sup> People can gauge the good condition of the heart from calm appearance, eyes that gleam with faith or a shabby appearance.<sup>22</sup> Stripped of externals one is armed with the weapons of Christ (*Hil.* 3, 36), and can manifest inner qualities (*Sev.* 43.5-6). God sees into the hearts of men<sup>23</sup> and protects them either directly or through angels.<sup>24</sup> Silence and isolation are desirable states.<sup>25</sup> The death of the saint is perceived positively, in terms of release and imminent resurrection rather than defeat, insult or matter for shame.<sup>26</sup>

Inevitably, shame is involved to some extent in the behaviour and defensive reactions of the holy men but the prized achievements are clearly endurance and restraint from within.<sup>27</sup> Whether demonic possession is a consequence of or punishment for lack of thought and behaviour control, it manifested as the antithesis of that quality. The hagiographers actively reject amoebic, shame-driven field dependence.

In doing so they were heirs to several traditions. Within the classical tradition, the practice of lauding the *sophrosyne*, modesty, restraint and simplicity of soldiers and statesmen may have encouraged some heart searching. Under the Principate, amongst the elite at least, impulse control favoured survival and career advancement. Pagan philosophical and ascetic traditions valued many of the qualities Christian saints became renowned for. Although different presuppositions may underlie their behaviour, Pythagoras, Apollonius of Tyana and Plotinus exemplify field-independent, impulse-controlling personalities who disdain externals.<sup>28</sup> The personality of the Stoic sage would also come into this category. Custody of the heart was an important Stoic tenet.<sup>29</sup> Stoic dispassionateness (*apatheia*) offered personal autonomy in a world when a more discrete sense of individuality had emerged and where gods were apparently less proximate and exorable. A greater sense of personal responsibility for one's actions and life style proceeds *pari passu* with a greater proneness to guilt and anxiety about guilt. The voluntaristic element in religion increased. In contrast to, say, observance of the imperial cult, participation in a voluntary group offered a range of responsibilities that could be undertaken: celibacy, meditation, prayer, healing, evangelism, magic.<sup>30</sup>

Disciplines such as prolonged prayer, fasting, wakefulness and silence are widely held to facilitate communication with the divine or the invisible, and to confer psychic powers such as clairvoyance and prophecy.<sup>31</sup> Spiritual attainment, wherever it occurs, reportedly gives holy and internally pure persons the capacity to penetrate facades and to see into the hearts of others, to heal and to control nature.

A distinct line of influence can be traced back to the Old Testament prophets. Mainline Judaism was very much a shame culture with its fear of disgrace, its emphasis on internal purity, its horror of leprous surfaces, its sense of failed covenant with Yahweh. In the Septuagint, Greek words for shame (*aidōs*, *aischynē* and cognates) occur 210 times.<sup>32</sup> The prophets, however, stressed internal, heart-purity and nourished a sense of guilt and deserved punishment that was stimulated by the catastrophe of exile. Jesus reinforced the message of the prophets and rebuked the Pharisees for their concern with ritual purity and exterior defilement. Intention in Jesus' teaching becomes as important as the deed. There is also an apparently deliberate shamelessness about Jesus' career. Veils are rent, mysteries revealed.<sup>33</sup> *Aidōs*, *aischynē* and cognates occur only 12 times in the Greek New Testament. Jesus lent force to the concept and ideology of the pure heart. The ethical code promulgated by theologians from St. Paul onwards favoured the cultivation of an inner vigilance against transgression. Larger, more mobile, more impersonal societies such as occur in the Hellenistic and Roman imperial worlds, find it necessary to regulate social conduct when the guidance of tradition and the sanction of shame, which operate so powerfully in smaller groups, lose their force.<sup>34</sup> Scrupulous observance of priestly or secular injunction may alleviate anxiety about identity when synoptic tribalism gives way to cosmopolitan pluralism. Anxiety and shame resulting from the abandonment of old pagan allegiances could be neutralized by preoccupation with the problems of guilt. Whereas shame facilitates social conformity through identification with certain commonly held ideals, guilt promotes conformity via submission to regulations. A prohibition on even thinking about hostile action aggravates guilt feelings. As (often unconscious) hostility against persons and laws forbidding aggressive expression grew, so did feelings of guilt, expectations of

punishment and anxiety over impending doom and judgment-day.<sup>35</sup> An imperial ideology of unanimity and concord, strenuously propagated from the late 3rd Century, also imposed an overt-aggression taboo that it was sinful to violate. In the 4th Century, as opportunities for the *agon* of martyrdom disappeared, opportunities offered by the *agon* of passion control were further explored. In a sense, the arena shifted inwards while Satan the deceiver, who epitomised shame-preoccupation, remained as a kind of external foe and potential subverter of encapsulation.<sup>36</sup>

If the prosperity and security of oneself and society are threatened, a natural and common response is to ask God or the gods for aid. If divine aid is not immediately forthcoming, it cannot be admitted that deity is impotent. The failure must lie within oneself or one's fellows: it is a question of fault and transgression.<sup>37</sup> This resolution has several attractions. A sense of events being meaningless is countered. To the extent that power is transferred to the individual, a fantasy of personal omnipotence is reinforced, while divine potency is unaffected.<sup>38</sup> What the individual thinks, the condition, purity, strength, peacefulness and vigilance of his heart determines what happens in the world outside. In effect, he assumes responsibility for divine intervention to make rain fall or drive away enemies. Voluntarism is salient. The favour-ensuring limits must be clearly set out and understood. If they are observed and aggression contained, divine anger is placated or averted. Furthermore, if the nature of one's thoughts can determine physical health, personal effort and discipline can protect one against sorcery, an external threat which can only work against a *soma* weakened by its *psyche*.<sup>39</sup> One can influence the field and dwell with some security in a self organised as a strong container. The benefits of structuring the personality in this way are increased if it is believed that perfect restraint confers on saints the power to see into the hearts of all. Concealment is impossible before such external and terrestrial monitors and unembarrassed confession relieves tension, discharges conflicts (demons), and help reestablish inner purity, i.e. catharsis via confession, not via revenge.

A sense of the deities who safeguarded the power and structure of the Roman Empire being less effective to preserve a benign environment may have begun to take hold from the late 2nd century

A.D. The 3rd century turmoil would have both reinforced this impression and provided reminders about the evils of indiscipline and uncurbed impulses.<sup>40</sup> Christians held that all men were considered sinners in the eyes of God and so what mattered was not the achievement of earthly fame and the accumulation of honours, but the preserving of inner purity and a clean slate to show to Him on Judgment Day and thus virtually compel a not-guilty verdict. Pagan values had also shown a shift of emphasis from outer to inner purity, from deed to intention. By the 2nd and 3rd century there is more evidence of disease being regarded as a punishment for moral evil rather than the random affliction or divine vengeance for affronted honour that shame cultures tend to perceive. Healers sought identification and confession of sin(s).<sup>41</sup> By the end of the 3rd century, the atmosphere was ripe for the formulation and imposition of stern codes of conduct that emphasised the penalties of transgression and the rewards of obedience, and offered expiation if transgression occurred. It was ripe for the ideal of the encapsulated personality.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the portrait of Fides, *Psych.* 24-6, 356-6, and my article "Boundaries and Bodies in Late Antiquity", *Arethusa* 12 (1979), pp. 93-114, esp. pp. 106-7. The concept of the pure heart in early Christianity is comprehensively treated by J. Raasch in five articles entitled "The Monastic Concept of the Purity of Heart and its Sources", published in *Studia Monastica*, vols. 8, 10, 11 and 12 (1966-70).

<sup>2</sup> Ambrose *De Off. Min.* 1.71: cf. 1.73 and J. T. Lienhard, *Paulinus of Nola and Early Western Monasticism*, (Bonn: Peter Hanstein Verlag, 1977), p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. F. R. Westley, "Merger and Separation: Autistic Symbolism in New Religious Movements", *Journal of Psychoanalytic Anthropology* 5 (1982), pp. 137-54.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. G. Piers and M. Singer, *Shame and Guilt*, 2nd ed. (New York: Norton, 1971); C. D. Schneider, *Shame, Exposure and Privacy*, (Boston: Beacon, 1977); J. G. Peristiany (ed.), *Honour and Shame*, (Chicago U.P., 1966); L. Wurmser, *The Mask of Shame*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins U.P., 1981); D. P. Ausabel, "Relationships between Shame and Guilt in the Socializing Process", *Psychological Review* 62 (1955), pp. 378-90; and G. Obeyesekere, *Medusa's Hair*, (Chicago: U.P., 1981) pp. 77-85, who distinguishes between primary guilt, such as anyone would experience after a crime such as parricide and which is universal, and a secondary guilt, the intensity and nature of which varies with the culture's particular ethical code and ideology, e.g. whether it subscribes to the doctrine of original sin. In shame cultures, shame may be played up and elaborated, while guilt is played down and left relatively unconceptualised (such as in Sri Lanka, where Sinhala has no word for guilt and renders conscience as "witness of the heart"); and conversely in guilt

cultures. Schneider and Wurmser point out that shame feelings can occur in circumstances other than failing to achieve an ideal.

<sup>5</sup> Social or charitable work may serve to satisfy an unconscious need to punish and control. Cf. H. Lawton, "The Myth of Altruism: a Psychohistory of Public Agency Social Work", *Journal of Psychohistory* 9 (1982), pp. 265-308.

<sup>6</sup> They are more associated with the images of looking, and concrete autonomic reactions like blushing, cringeing, sweating, than with words. Cf. H. B. Lynd, *On Shame and the Search for Identity*, (New York: Science Editions, 1961), pp. 64-71.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. H. D. Lewis, "Shame and Guilt in Neurosis", *Psychoanalytic Review* 58, (1971), pp. 419-38.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. L. Thompson, *Culture in Crisis. A Study of the Hopi Indians*, (New York: Russell, 1950); W. C. O'Kane, *The Hopis: Portrait of a Desert People*, (Oklahoma: U.P., 1953); R. B. Brandt, *Hopi Ethics: a Theoretical Analysis*, (Chicago U.P., 1954); and above all the imaginative article by S. K. Postal, "Body Image and Identity: a Comparison of Kwakiutl and Hopi", *American Anthropologist* 67 (1965), pp. 455-61. The similarity between the Pueblo Indian ethos and that of early Christian ascetics is noted by T. Merton, *The Wisdom of the Desert*, (New York: New Directions, 1960), p. 9. Merton points out that the situations are different in that the Hopi way, unlike that of the Christian ascetic, does not involve a reaction against a known sophistication. Also, the Hopi are not sexually puritanical and have no doctrine of original sin. Rorschach tests on the Zuni, a Pueblo people whose culture is very similar to that of the Hopi, reveals a highly encapsulated modal personality. Cf. S. Fisher and S. Cleveland, *Body Image and Personality*, 2nd ed., (New York: Van Nostrand, 1968), pp. 280-96.

<sup>9</sup> At this point it is hard not to be reminded of, for example, the trials of St. Anthony in the desert when one reads the story of brave Locust with the unwinking, unsleeping eyes. "Yellow Cloud was very wrath and darted yellow lightning at Locust .... but he never winked ...." Blue Cloud "too was wrath and flung his blue lightning at Locust and it passed through him from side to side, and he only continued to play (the flute) as before." Red Cloud and White Cloud likewise sent lightning through Locust "from belly to back ... from head to toe" with equal lack of effect. They salute him, "You are brave and deathless; your heart and those of your people must be good." See A. N. Stephen, *Hopi Tales*, *Journal of American Folklore* 24 (1929), pp. 1-72, esp. pp. 5-7.

<sup>10</sup> Postal (at note 8), p. 459.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Thompson (at note 8), pp. 88-90, 124-37; O'Kane (at note 8), p. 160; and D. F. Aberle, *The Psychosocial Analysis of a Hopi Life-history*, (Berkeley: California U.P., 1951), pp. 16-28.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. below, note 29.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Postal, (at note 8); R. Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, (London: Routledge, 1935), pp. 135-77; F. Boas, *Kwakiutl Tales*, (New York: Columbia U.P., 1935); M. T. Gil-Del-Real and B. R. Brown, "Potlatching and Face-maintenance of the Kwakiutl of British Columbia", *Journal of Psychoanalytic Anthropology* 3 (1980), pp. 295-308; R. P. and E. C. Rohmer, *The Kwakiutl*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970). Kwakiutl culture no longer survives in its anthropologically classic form.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. e.g. the story of the man with mouths all over his body, (Boas, at note 12, p. 10). As a favour, another person closes them all up except one.

<sup>15</sup> Their ideal military campaign is an ambush that causes heavy casualties to the foe but none to themselves, accompanied by atrocities that win them a reputa-

tion for being terrifying that should discourage all challenge for a while. Cf. H. Codere, *Fighting with Property* (Seattle: Washington U.P., 1956), pp. 98-108.

<sup>16</sup> Benedict, (at note 13), pp. 156-7.

<sup>17</sup> *Sev.* 1.2, 1.4, 4.9, 7.3, 8.2, 25.3, 28.1, 38.1.

<sup>18</sup> *Ant.* 9, 20, 23, 30, 36.

<sup>19</sup> *Hil.* 10, 30, 43; *Mart.* 2, 3; *Dan.* 6, 12; *Amb.* 1.1, 3.7; *Paul* 12, 17.

<sup>20</sup> *Ant.* 22, 23, 25, 28.

<sup>21</sup> *Mart.* 21; *Sev.* 35.2, 43.4.

<sup>22</sup> *Ant.* 67; *Hil.* 4; *Mart.* 9.

<sup>23</sup> *Amb.* 8.27 bis; *Paul*, 11; *Sev.* 43.4; *Ant.* 55: cf. *Ant.* 7; *Hil.* 6-7, 30, 42. There are some significant psychological findings on heart awareness. It has been shown that individuals who are more aware of their heart compared with their skin and muscles (where shameful inner states like fear and embarrassment are betrayed by tension, pallor, horripilation, sweating and blushing) tend to be more prone to guilt-concern about wrong doing and sexual expression; to be more puritanical and to have a strong sense of morality and duty; and to be less interested in aesthetics and entertainment. A heart-focussed person tends to seal himself off from artistic and imaginative stimuli and to repress certain forms of fantasy, particularly if sexual or "immoral". Cf. S. Fisher, *Body Experience in Fantasy and Behaviour*, (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970), pp. 407-23, and Ennodius' *Life of St. Epiphanius*. Epiphanius conforms closely to the saintly paradigm. His body proclaims his inner beauty. He was indifferent to commendation, high office and comfort, refusing to bathe lest he diminish his purity of heart and dissipate his inner strength thereby. He had ferocious recourse to vigil, fast and standing for long periods in one place whenever his imagination became sensual. For discussion of the ascetic preoccupation in late antiquity with maintaining a dialogue with the invisible companions/patrons who could see into the heart, see P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, (London: S.C.M., 1981), pp. 53-74.

<sup>24</sup> *Amb.* 4.12, 4.13, 4.16, 8.31, 6.17, 6.20; *Sev.* 17.3, 43.4; *Dan.* 47.

<sup>25</sup> *Hil.* 32, 43; *Mal.* 3; *Mart.* 26; *Sev.* 4.9, 7.3, 39.2; *Dan.* 13, 62.

<sup>26</sup> *Dan.* 92, 93, 95, 97; *Amb.* 9.40, 10.45, 10.47, 11.55; *Ant.* 89, 92; *Paul.* 14; *Sev.* 43.1: cf. 16.5, 26.1.

<sup>27</sup> The ostentatious self-abasement of Daniel Stylites, demonstrating superiority by looking down on crowds from the top of a pillar is worthy of the Kwakiutl. The standard of endurance which he set himself, taken over from Simeon Stylites (*Dan.* 21, 32, 54, 57), was a very personal one. Histrionics, generally, and jeering at demons, particularly, might be seen as part of the shame syndrome. A shame-driven sense of not being at home in society and its conventions may promote a physical withdrawal in search of a new identity. The idea of shaming and being ashamed occurs quite often in the life of Anthony (5, 55: Anthony is ashamed of his bodily needs, 45, 47, 60) and Athanasius says that Satan was shamed by Anthony's achievements (5). Self-abasement is a way of avoiding the possibility of being shamed as well as being a means of pre-empting punishment. The Hopi have a lively sense of shame and some of their self-effacing behaviour is motivated by a wish to avoid the risk of humiliation: cf. O'Kane (at note 8), p. 6. However, one could also argue that Daniel's self-torture is a typical guilt-ridden attempt to propitiate or intercept punishment from another. Cf. *Dan.* 42: "If ever I am tempted to partake of more food than I require, I punish myself" (my italics), *Amb.* 8.39, where the idea of preemptive self-accusation is approved, and C. Mounteer, "Guilt, Martyrdom and Monasticism", *Journal of Psychohistory* 9 (1981), pp.

145-72. The paranoid style, exemplified by Anthony in particular, which sees Satan's snares everywhere and can suspect demons even in the guise of angels, monks and animals is a fairly typical sign of proneness to guilt and projection. Cf. J. Beattie and J. Middleton, *Spirit Mediumship and Society in Africa*, (London: Routledge, 1969), pp. 303-4, and Obeyesekere (at note 4). Demons are most useful vehicles for discharging tabooed impulses. When one of the keynotes of a hagiography (cf. H. Balderman, "Die Vita Severini des Eugippius", *Wiener Studien* 77 (1964), pp. 164-73) is that whoever obeys God's or the saint's *commands* is saved, while whoever opposed them is *punished*, then the fear of transgression is obviously meant to be a greater influence on behaviour than fear of ridicule.

<sup>28</sup> Some of the links between Christian asceticism and the Hellenistic philosophical tradition are explored by G. Fowden, "The Pagan Holy Man in Late Antique Society", *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 102 (1982), pp. 33-59; A. Meredith, "Asceticism Christian and Greek", *Journal of Theological Studies* 27 (1976), pp. 313-332; H. J. W. Drijvers, "Hellenistic and Oriental Origins", in *The Byzantine Saint*, ed. S. Hackel, University of Birmingham Fourteenth Spring Symposium on Byzantine Studies, (1981), pp. 25-36.

<sup>29</sup> J. Raasch, "The Monastic Concept of the Purity of Heart and its Sources", *Studia Monastica* 8 (1966), pp. 3-33.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. H. C. Kee, *Miracle in the Early Christian World*, (Ithaca: Yale, 1983), p. 61.

<sup>31</sup> R. Arbesmann, "Fasting and Prophecy in Pagan and Christian Antiquity", *Traditio* 7 (1949-51), pp. 1-71; R. Browning, "The 'Low Level' Saint's Life in the Early Byzantine World", in Hackel (at n. 28), pp. 117-27.

<sup>32</sup> Ideas of guilt and guiltiness occur hardly at all, although "sin" and "trespass" are more frequent. See Schneider, (at n. 4), pp. 113, 165; Lynd, (at n. 6), p. 25.

<sup>33</sup> Schneider, (at n. 4), pp. 10-13, 113 and cf. 2. *Cor.* 3.12-18. Nietzsche identified three enemies of shame: science, Christianity, and the mediocre or ignoble.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Ausubel, (at n. 4).

<sup>35</sup> T. Reik, *Myth and Guilt*, (New York: Hutchinson, 1957), traces a growing consciousness of guilt in the Mediterranean as Christianity spread, manifesting as "a vague discomfort, a premonition of misfortune, its reason unknown but partly due to the repressed aggressiveness of the masses" (p. 235; cf. pp. 178, 194). Reik links the increasing severity of priestly injunctions against aggressive expression with increasing asceticism and loss of joyous spontaneity. Mounteer (at n. 27) traces a growth of guilt feelings amongst both pagans and Christians from the 1st century A.D. (It is interesting therefore that J. Seiber, *The Urban Saint in Early Byzantine Social History*, British Archaeological Reports, Supplementary Series 37, (1977) pp. 83-94 should nominate the 1st century as the time when the Plato/Aristotle idea of physical exercise ensuring a healthy body was replaced by the idea of health being the product of a balanced and harmonious soul. The *soma* therefore reflects the health of the *psyche*. In this scheme of ego-bolstering, demons are not perceived as projected impulses or afflictions *per se*, but as agents of afflictions, eager to attack the *soma* weakened by the *psyche*.) The Hopi may exhibit much apparent autonomy and they may postulate an ideal of self-disclosure, but their inhibitions and their taboos against competition and physical aggression rob their behaviour of vigor and spontaneity. Also, paranoia and mistrust are rampant as individuals quite reasonably suspect others of harboring the hostile impulses they themselves harbor but may not express except through gossip. On Hopi suspiciousness, cf. D. Eggan, "The General Problems of Hopi Adjustment", c.

16, in C. Kluckhohn and H. Murray (edd.), *Personality in Nature, Society and Culture*, (New York: Knopff, 1961), and Aberle (at n. 11), pp. 121-5. See too S. Fisher and S. Cleveland, *Body Image and Personality*, 2nd ed., (New York: Van Nostrand, 1968), pp. 203-37, who note the apparent high degree of autonomy and proneness to suspicion of strongly encapsulated (High Barrier) personality structures, as well as their proneness to stereotyped, rigid and limited behavior patterns. Markedly amoebic (Low Barrier) personalities appear to be more impressionable and field dependent, but also more spontaneous, unconventional, creative and imaginative.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. M. P. McHugh, "The Demonology of St. Ambrose in Light of the Tradition", *Wiener Studien* 91 (1978), pp. 205-31; C. J. de Vogel, "The Sōma-Sēma Formula: its Function in Plato and Plotinus Compared to Christian Writers", in H. J. Blumenthal and R. A. Markus (edd.), *Neoplatonism and Early Christian Thought*. (London: Variorum Publications, 1981). De Vogel discusses the ancient concepts of Sēma as a firm enclosure to both contain and serve as a prison of expiation. In general, however, Plato regarded human life more as a challenge than as some kind of penance.

<sup>37</sup> Eggan (at n. 35) suggests that the Hopi responded in this way because the rain needed for their survival in a marginal environment was not always sent by the invoked deities. Cf. M. Van Uytange, "La Bible dans la 'Vie de saint Severin' d'Eugippius", *Latomus* 33 (1974), pp. 324-52.

<sup>38</sup> One could transfer blame to the machinations of Satan and demons or to the manipulation of forces by sorcerers. But even this explanation might confirm belief in the necessity and value of the pure, unified heart, for demons and sorcerers epitomise the opposite condition. Hopi sorcerers are called Two-hearts, where duplicity indicates impurity. Cf. P. R. Brown, "Sorcery, Demons and the Rise of Christianity: from Late Antiquity into the Middle Ages", in *Religion and Society in the Age of St. Augustine*, (London: Faber, 1972), pp. 119-53, esp. p. 124, on the pure (*castus*) man with the Single Image versus the sorcerer and man with the Double Image.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Seiber, (at n. 35). It is interesting and relevant to note that part of Nietzsche's charge of shamelessness against Christianity lay in its apparent fostering of delusions of grandeur.

<sup>40</sup> C. G. Alföldy, "The Crisis of the Third Century as Seen by Contemporaries". *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 15 (1974), pp. 89-111.

<sup>41</sup> R. Parker, *Pollution and Purification in Early Greek Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), pp. 67, 251-4.

<sup>42</sup> My thanks to Graeme Clarke for commenting on an earlier draft of this paper.

A REED PIERCED THE SKY:

*Hopi Indian Cosmography on Third Mesa, Arizona*

ARMIN W. GEERTZ

The study of spatial concepts among the Hopi Indians of Arizona is a complicated affair. Because the evidence is rich and highly diversified, the interpretations tend to be so as well.

Hopi spatial concepts can roughly be divided into two general categories: 1. cosmological space as revealed through mythology, and the ritual space of the ceremonials, and 2. terrestrial space as revealed through language, village layouts, agricultural holdings, and other social, political or geographical referents.

This paper will concentrate upon the first general category. But it should be emphasized that mythological models also serve as a basis for a number of referents belonging to the second group, and therefore due reference will be made when necessary.

There are a number of specialized studies relating to the second group which should be mentioned. Hopi linguistic space has been given a rigorous scientific investigation by E. Malotki.<sup>1</sup> Studies of village layouts were made by C. Mindeleff and recently by S. A. Stubbs<sup>2</sup> (an aerial photographic study). Studies of agricultural holdings have been made by R. M. Bradfield and C. D. Forde among others.<sup>3</sup> Other studies concerning related topics are F. H. Ellis' study of boundary markers and M. Titiev's studies of social space.<sup>4</sup>

Efforts have been made to systematize the evidence for Hopi cosmological space and ritual space. But all of the attempts hitherto published have been simplistic. Titiev's opinion that duality is the basis of all Hopi ceremonial systematization<sup>5</sup> has been accepted without question by later research. For example, L. Hieb built upon this theory in his unpublished dissertation in 1972 and reiterated it in 1979. He considered the Hopi six-directional system (consisting of the horizontal and verticle world points) as being a group of binary units—which is correct—but he has delineated an

elaborate bipartite system—which is incorrect.<sup>6</sup> R. M. Bradfield postulates the same theory. He added depth to his analysis by introducing the mythological personae associated with directional ideology. But the very complexity of the historical end-product forced him to explain certain aspects away in order to fit his theory.<sup>7</sup>

A system reduced to elaborate bipartitions is highly arbitrary. It postulates a simplicity which the indigenous evidence does not allow. *There is no strict duality in Hopi life* as with, for example, the Tewa.<sup>8</sup> Hopi duality is, in fact, only one aspect of an excitingly complex picture.

The Hopi use both the quadripartite and the sexpartite divisions of the world. These two must be considered as being two independent systems. The sexpartite system, i.e., horizontal-verticle orientation, I will call the “Astrosphere Orientation.” This system is peculiar to the Pueblo Culture, and furthermore, the semantic content of this ideology differs from pueblo to pueblo. This division of the world represents a systematization of the known world for a tribe like the Zuni, as Durkheim and Mauss noted, but does not apply to the Hopi as they wrongly surmised. Zoological, biological, geological and cultural systematization is to be found intimately linked with the Hopi clan system.<sup>9</sup>

The six-directional tables constructed by Lévi-Strauss and again by Bradfield<sup>10</sup> require comment, but before I do, the reader must be made aware of the state of the data before us.<sup>11</sup> In the first place, it cannot be overemphasized that the people called “Hopi” are actually a loosely organized group of independent matrilineal clans. Each clan has its own traditions about how things came to be as they are. And each clan has its own set of rituals and ceremonies with each their origin, efficacy, area of responsibility and method of performance. Within each clan are individuals of varying age and status who can produce varying degrees of accurate statements concerning their religious ideas when interviewed. Not only are there disagreements between clan traditions, but one also finds conflicting traditions and institutions peculiar to Mesa and village affiliations.

In the second place, we find that the early ethnographic data is of varying quality depending upon the researcher’s knowledge of the

Hopi language, and the later syntheses merely repeat the often faulty or poorly understood data of earlier studies.<sup>12</sup> Taking into consideration that with a few notable, exceptions, such as E. A. Kennard, no ethnologist, anthropologist, ethnopsychologist or sociologist has seriously studied the Hopi language, one is left with a large body of evidence elicited in a language foreign to the native speaker. And although the Hopi language is not as exotic as B. L. Whorf's inexplicable exaggerations indicate,<sup>13</sup> even today one is hard put to find Hopis with a dependable knowledge of English. None are so well-trained as to be proficient in expressing Hopi religious knowledge in the often foreign English idiom. Until now no one has attempted to correct this body of faulty data.<sup>14</sup>

On the basis of the above-mentioned problems, I reject Lévi-Strauss' table in his *La Pensée Sauvage* mainly because he was not well-acquainted with the data from the Southwest. Bradfield, on the other hand, has field experience among the Hopi, albeit concerning agriculture, botany and ornithology. My rejection of his table is based upon the fact that his system does not exist among the Hopi. Bradfield is himself aware of this and admits that the chart is of little use. His main source is H. R. Voth's collection of Powamuy Songs.<sup>15</sup> But even a cursory glance shows conflicting evidence, which Voth notes as well.<sup>16</sup>

In order to avoid some of the problems which confront students of Hopi religion, I will limit my exposition to data from Third Mesa, especially Orayvi. These data will be supplemented by material collected by me in Hotvela, which is peopled by refugees from Orayvi. While maintaining and accentuating the context of a limited area with which I have personal experience and linguistic knowledge, I will attempt to pursue a study of the basic cosmographical components in Third Mesa Hopi Mythology.

### 1. *Emergence Mythology*

What evidence is there concerning Hopi mythological space? The most obvious place to begin is where the Hopi themselves begin, i.e., with the Myth of the Emergence of Mankind. The Hopi are not very interested in how everything was first created. Although there are indications of creation stories, the main interest by far is with the Emergence.

There are many versions of this myth. Keeping strictly to the Third Mesa evidence, I have found approximately twelve versions, including the two I recorded in 1978 and 1979.<sup>17</sup>

All of the published versions are not without political implications as E. S. Goldfrank pointed out in 1948.<sup>18</sup> With a few exceptions, all of the published versions were told by the Village Chiefs, relatives of theirs or other leaders directly responsible for the split of Orayvi and the founding of Hotvela in 1906.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, not a single published version (and this includes all of the versions from the other Mesas as well) contains the original Hopi text.

The Emergence Myth is an integral part of what I call the "Four Worlds Cycle." This mythical corpus is not well known to researchers. In fact, it is probably not very well known to the Hopi either. There is most likely no clan which owns the complete details of the Four Worlds Cycle. This statement is based upon the fact that all of the versions known to me are either faulty concerning their textual worth, or are clearly influenced in one way or another by non-Hopi elements. Powell's version and Cushing's version are the oldest.<sup>20</sup> Neither man knew the Hopi language, and neither were in the area for more than three months. Powell's version shows some misunderstanding on his part and Cushing's version is influenced by his knowledge of Zuni cosmology. Cushing's informant was a volatile political figure whose sole intention was to scare Washington with tales of occult power. Waters' and Courlander's separate versions are acknowledged syntheses based upon accounts drawn from different clans, villages and Mesas. My version, recorded in December 1978 by a Two-Horn Priest of the Eagle Clan, is heavily influenced by Christian mythology, with constant comparisons with the Old Testament. Even the Hopi tutelary deity, Maasaw, is considered in this version as being a mispronunciation of "messiah."

Nevertheless, with the exception of Waters' version, these and the purely "Emergence" Myths are all in agreement that Hopi mythology is based *a priori* upon the belief that the present World is one of several (in most cases, it is the Fourth World) all cosmographically situated one upon the other. Some versions picture a series of caves resting one upon the other. As Powell correctly noted, the Hopi "notion of the form and constitution of the world is architectural; that it is composed of many stories."<sup>21</sup>

Each world begins as a paradise, but is sooner or later disrupted through mankind's evil behaviour. Each world is destroyed by natural catastrophe which forces the faithful few, led by certain clan deities, to climb up to the next world level, the floor of which is the sky of the lower level. In all levels, the cane reed is the method of transportation.

The Emergence Myth continues this line of reasoning by describing the conditions of the Third World prior to the Emergence to the present Fourth World. Even though the versions mentioned are of varying reliability, the main features of the myth are consistently present.<sup>22</sup> Again, the paradisiac situation is destroyed through disobedience, evil magic and sexual immorality. The Chiefs gather together to discuss the options. The possibility of travelling to the next world level is considered—it being warranted by tradition. Since the Chiefs had heard Someone's footsteps in the sky, they decide to send a bird, created by Society magic, to find Whoever was up there and attempt negotiations with Him. After three attempts, the bird sent by the Kwan Society (according to my Kwan version) succeeded in piercing the sky. Shortly afterwards, this bird meets the tutelary deity of the Kwan Society, namely, Maasaw, who happens to be living at the present site of Orayvi. Maasaw is the Ruler of the Fourth World. In the Hopi view of things, He became the Protector of the Hopi, the God of Fire and of the Dead, as well as the Purifier Who will return on the Last Day of this Fourth World existence.

Maasaw is asked by the bird, on behalf of the human race, for permission to bring them up to His World and to live on His land. He agrees on the condition that they follow his spartan way of life.

The bird returns with this message. The Chiefs begin once again to wield their magical powers. They plant several types of trees which are to provide them with the means of transporting themselves to the world above. After the third try, it seems that the cane reed is the only plant strong enough to pierce the sky while still holding itself up. Upon the Emergence of Mankind from this hole, which is called *sipaapuni* (the etymology of which is unsure, perhaps from *sipoq*, "in the womb" or *sipna*, "navel"),<sup>23</sup> the cane reed is ripped up and knocked down in order to prevent the evil ones from following them.

After that, languages and the different maize types are distributed among the tribes of men. But besides this, there are three other events which are important to this study.

In the first place, the sun and the moon are created by the newly emerged Hopi leaders. It seems that the Fourth World was soft and without heat or light, except for Maasaw's fire.

In the second place, a death occurs: the Village Chief's son dies. This death is absolute proof that a witch had escaped with them in the confusion of the flight from the Third World. As the Chief is about to cast the exposed witch back into the hole of Emergence, the witch pleads with the Chief to look into the *sipaapuni*. Upon doing this he sees his dead son, very much alive, in the Underworld, happily enjoying the Paradise of the Dead. The witch is allowed to live since death is obviously a transition to another and better life form.

In the third place, the human tribes spread over the face of the continent. Each clan has its own Migration Tradition, but the goal of all these migrations was to explore the continent and for each clan to test its particular cultic power. The clans spread out, as commanded by Maasaw, in all directions. But they were also directed to return to Maasaw's land, especially Orayvi. Little by little, each clan arrived at Orayvi, but were first allowed entrance after demonstrating their cultic abilities. Each clan was thereafter allotted plots of land.

## *2. An Interpretation of Emergence Mythology: World Axis, World Center, Opposing Worlds*

Although there is other evidence, which will be introduced below, it is necessary to stop here and identify those elements of cosmography which the Four Worlds Cycle illustrate.

There are two obvious elements which come to mind: that of four worlds resting upon one another and the fact that these worlds are connected. It should be noted here that the means of connection are four different plants, but all of the same species, i.e., *paagavi*, "cane reed." I identify this system as being Axial, and the cane reed as being one of the many *Axis Mundi* figures which are found in so many religions the world over. Eliade<sup>24</sup> defined *Axis Mundi* as being

a link between this world, the world above and the world below, and he identified different types of axes, such as trees, mountains, towers and pillars. He also noted that the world's religions have associated widely different semantic value to the *Axis Mundi* conception.

Even though I consider the Hopi *Paaqavi* as being an *Axis Mundi*, the use of this element in Hopi thought differs in certain respects from Eliade's understanding of the term.

Thus we note that this *Paaqavi* is a means of transportation for *all humanity*, and not just the usual lone religious specialist. Furthermore, the Hopi version speaks of an eschatological escape upon this Axis from one world to another as opposed to its usual use as a channel of continual congress. The Hopi Axis is used only once for each world.

The Emergence Myth seems to use the *Axis Mundi* in a purely functional manner. It is not considered to be a "source of cosmic life," an "abode of the soul," a "manifestation of Divinity" and so on. It is purely a means of communication. *This Axial system, and all it implies, is directly equivalent to the Hopi Astrosphere cosmography*, because it derives from the same principles of orientation.

As soon as the people emerge, the place of Emergence, Sipaapuni, becomes a true World Center. Again, an element common to the history of religions. Among the religions of the world we find stones, trees, mountains, temples, palaces and cities functioning as Centers of the World. The "center" is here understood as "le lieu par où passe l'*Axis mundi* ... le point de jonction entre Ciel, Terre et Enfer."<sup>25</sup> This definition seems to conform with the Hopi model.

The *sipaapuni*, it should be noted, is not only a spot on the cosmic topographic map. It is also a geographical place, which lies at the bottom of the Grand Canyon (Öngtupqa, "Salt Canyon"). F. B. Eiseman's description of the *sipaapuni* is as follows:

This structure is a rounded travertine dome, approximately 30 yards in diameter, roughly round at the base, about 20 feet high, and with a flat top about 15 feet in diameter. The stream side of this dome is somewhat higher than the north side. A pool of yellow water about 10 feet in diameter occupies most of the top of the dome. Gas bubbles ascend constantly through the water. The depth of the pool was not ascertained, but it must be fairly deep, since the pool was opaque and a sample of the water taken in a cup appeared

almost colorless. A travertine-encrusted log lies wedged in the pool. The pool spills over the east side of the dome down a chute, colored bright yellow by the mineral deposit to the river below.<sup>26</sup>

After the Emergence, the eschatological hopes of humanity were quickly deflated. Coming from an older world, in the midst of destruction, the people find a new world yet unfinished, leaving them in a similar though inverted state of affairs. And it was not only the environment which was imperfect. Having been under the impression that all Evil had been left behind, they now found themselves in the ironic position of not only being the bearers of what they sought to escape but also bringing Death along for the ride.

If we consider the establishment of Death from a cosmographical point of view, one is struck by the transformation of the Third World, which was filled with evil and destruction, into the Underworld, where all the Hopi dead live on, and, apparently, live on in a blissful existence. This World of the Dead is called Maski, "Maasaw's House."

We receive no explanation concerning how or why the transformation took place. Nor do we learn why the Underworld should be paradisiacal. Another unanswered question is why does Maasaw live in the Underworld when His Kingdom obviously is the Fourth World (Orayvi).

These circumstances constitute for me proof that the Hopi conception of the Underworld arose from an ideology which was independent of the Emergence Mythology.

The introduction of the World of the Dead in an Underworld underlines the third most important cosmographical and cosmological feature of Hopi mythology: that of Opposing Worlds of being, a strict and unavoidable ontological duality.

Inherent in the Emergence Mythology, we find another World Center which is independent of Sipaapuni. I am thinking of the goal which was set for all of the clans. All of the clans dispersed from the Axial Center and arrived at an alternative Center, i.e., Hopiland, specifically Orayvi, where Maasaw lives. This Migration Mythology served on the one hand to establish Orayvi—and therefore Hopiland, which lies a good 100 km. away from Sipaapuni—as the Center of the World, and on the other hand to

establish each clan's rights to political leadership, the best property and the most lucratively placed farmlands. Thus, this mythology constitutes a cosmography, an urbanography, a sociography and a agripolitical geography.

The main consequence of this new Center, anchored in the home of the tutelary deity of the Hopi, is the introduction of *two World Centers which are in horizontal opposition to each other*. In other words, each Center is peripheral to the other. And since Maasaw apparently dwells at both of these Centers, then He must be the epistemological link between the two.

### 3. *Fertility Mythology: World Center and World Axis*

The next group of myths which revolve around fertility, fecundity and the deities of those functions, I call "Fertility Mythology." Our interest here is restricted to those Fertility Myths which involve the place known as Tuuwanasavi ("Sand-Center-Place"), i.e., "Center of the World," as opposed to Tuuwaqalalni ("Sand-Border"), i.e., "the Horizon" or "the Edge of the World."<sup>27</sup> Tuuwanasavi has perhaps been incorporated into the modern Hopi worldview, but it has been known to scholars since Voth's work.<sup>28</sup> There are a few myths which illustrate the nature of this place.

Voth related a myth<sup>29</sup> about the time Orayvi suffered from a four year famine which was caused by crop failure due to frost and drought. Due to the activities of an abandoned bother and sister, and a hummingbird, the God of Germination and Growth, Muy'ingwa, was persuaded to visit His life-giving powers once more upon the face of the earth.

What is of interest for us here is that Tuuwanasavi, which lies under a cactus with a single red blossom, consists of three *kivas* each beneath the other.<sup>30</sup> In each *kiva* are found different types of edible vegetation. And each *kiva* is connected by an opening in the floor of the one above it. Muy'ingwa lives in the bottommost *kiva* together with grass herbs and maize of all kinds as well as all kinds of birds (these would most likely be birds of warmth and fertility).

Muy'ingwa's ascent is worth quoting:

He first ascended to the first *kiva* above him, where he stayed four days. During this time it rained a little about Oraibi. After four days he ascended into

the next kiva above him when it rained again on the earth. He then ascended into the third kiva, whereupon it rained considerably in and around Oraibi, and when he after four more days emerged from the last kiva he found that the grasses and herbs were growing nicely.<sup>31</sup>

Other myths emphasize Tuuwanasavi's heat-giving qualities.

The axiality of this place is obvious. The myth further illustrates something which will be shown in the section on ceremonial integration below, namely, that ritual activity is enhanced and made effective through strict adherence to spatial contexts and its complementary numerals.

I recorded a myth about "The Boy and the Eagles"<sup>32</sup> which relates how a boy was borne up to another world in the sky by an eagle. In order to penetrate the hole in the sky which connects the earth with the heavenly world, the bird flew to Tuuwanasavi (where the boy's parents had their cornfield by chance) and first then began ascending to the next world. The entrance hole is described as being a *sipaapuni* hole in the floor of a *kiva*.

In this manner, Tuuwanasavi's axiality is extended through the heavens, constituting a true *Axis Mundi*.

#### 4. *Solar Mythology: Opposing Worlds, World Axis, World Center*

It seems that the Sun is of little consequence in Emergence Mythology, since, as we learned, the Sun was created by human beings, although a few versions give the honor to Kookyangwuuti, "Spider Woman."

There are a number of myths about Taawa, "The Sun", which are not associated with the Emergence Mythology in any way. This separate "Solar Mythology", as I call it, has been published in a few versions<sup>33</sup> but is continually evident throughout Hopi mythology and especially in Hopi everyday belief.

The myth relates that there lived a Huru'ingwuuti in the eastern ocean and a Huru'ingwuuti in the western ocean. This deity type is translated by Voth as "Hard Being Woman," who owns hard substances such as shells, corals, turquoise, and beads.<sup>34</sup> We find that this dual Huru'ingwuuti is restricted to Third Mesa.

The Sun rises from the eastern Huru'ingwuuti's *kiva* (here understood simply as an underground chamber), and sets in the *kiva* of the western Huru'ingwuuti, wherefrom he continues his

journey through the Underworld to the eastern *kiva* again. In this myth the two female deities create the solid land and upon the instigation of the Sun they create animals and humans. This is, of course, diametrically opposed to the Emergence Myth.

Noteworthy it is, how much the concept of Opposing Worlds is integrated in this myth. There are the two eastern/western regions, which are linked by the Sun's diurnal movement and the two Upper/Under Worlds which are linked by the Sun's nocturnal movement. But two very important points on this solar circuit are the *sipaapuni* holes in the two respective *kivas*. These two *sipaapuni* are understood here as being *two corresponding and complimentary World Centers*.

There are other elements, such as rainbow bridges and the activities of the two Huru'ingwwuutis which enhance this duality, but we must go on to other myths which typologically belong to the Solar Mythology.

The myth which explains the traditions of the Snake Clan is one of these. Here I am thinking specifically of the myth called "The Boy from Tokoonavi."<sup>35</sup> In this myth, the dual Huru'ingwwuutis are active figures, and in my version of the myth<sup>36</sup> the Boy from Tokoonavi actually travels with the Sun on one of His twenty-four hour voyages, where he "learns about everything."

A closely related group of myths are those concerning the two Pöqangwhoya Brothers. These two little mischief-makers appear as the war-like grandsons of Kookyangwwuuti, or as she is sometimes called, Kookyangwso'wuuti, "Spider Grandmother", who is the patroness of the Hopi.<sup>37</sup> Of great interest here is that in the versions from the other two Mesas, these Brothers are the sons of Taawa Himself. Meaning that by their very existence, they emphasize the duality which is associated with the Sun. I have unfortunately not heard a Third Mesa version of the birth of the Pöqangwhoyas and am therefore in doubt whether Solar progenitorship is present there.<sup>38</sup>

In conclusion, we find that the Solar Mythology introduces an ideology apart from the Emergence Mythology. Although the motives are similar, the cosmography is very different. In the first place, these myths focus upon the familiar heavenly body, the Sun. Secondly, there is a curious inversion in relationship to Emergence

cosmogony. Finally, the two Opposing Worlds and two World Centers are fully integrated in Solar Mythology.

### 5. *Ceremonial Integration: Cult Ritual, Ancestors, and Katsinas*

Our mythological evidence has thus far illustrated three cosmographical principles in no less than eleven variations. Hopi ceremoniology is likewise based upon these principles: *Astrosphere Orientation, the Center and Opposing Worlds*. The former two principles permeate the entire mythological corpus and are the framework of ritual space. But all eleven variations become activated and are integrated in cult ritual.

In my earlier investigation of Hopi cult and mythology, I attempted to analyze the significance of the Astrosphere system as it functions in altar rituals and altar iconography.<sup>39</sup> The six directions are comprised of a nadir-zenith axis and the four cardinal directions. Through the use of the published material from all the Mesas, I identified the deities of the axis as follows: Sootukwnangwu (zenith), Maasaw (center) and Muy'ingwa (nadir). The Beings of the cardinal directions have no personal names. But field experience has persuaded me that this synthesis, based upon pan-Mesa material is an artificial model which is more an expression of European logic than Hopi logic.

My material indicates that the semantic coordination of these different cosmographical models from Third Mesa can better be found by investigating the relationship between Ancestor ideology and Astrosphere Orientation.

#### 5.a. *Chiefs of the Astrosphere and Conceptions Concerning the Dead*

Within the ritual context, one finds invocations of the Six Direction Chiefs: *Kwiningyaq Sikya'omawmongwi*, "the Yellow Cloud Chief from the North(west)," *Taavangqw Sakwa'omawmongwi*, "the Blue/Green Cloud Chief from the (South)west," *Tatkyaq Pala'omawmongwi*, "the Red Cloud Chief from the South(east)," *Hoopaq Qötsa'omawmongwi*, "the White Cloud Chief from the (North)east," *Oongaqw Qöma'omawmongwi*, "the Black Cloud Chief from the Above," and *Atkyaq Masi'omawmongwi*, "the Grey Cloud Chief from the Below."<sup>40</sup>

Already with their names we can deduce a number of things about these Beings: 1. each is a Chief and therefore has subjects to rule over, 2. each cloud belongs to one of the six directions, and 3. each cloud has a specific color.

If one attempts to specify the characteristics of these creatures, one is confronted with the bewildering data from First Mesa and almost nothing from Third Mesa. One thing remains certain in the sparse mythological data: these Chiefs are very humanlike. There is a Third Mesa myth which tells about how these Cloud Chiefs, in human form, approached a Hopi girl one at a time in order to propose to her.<sup>41</sup> Accepting this piece of information, the Hopi conception of these Beings is that of clouds in human form.

Don Talayesva from Orayvi called them “the Six-Point-Cloud-People—our departed ancestors who live north, east, south, west, above, and below”, who can send or withhold rain, health, good crops, long life, drought and famine.<sup>42</sup> The Katsinas, on the other hand are servants who bring offerings to the Astrosphere Cloud People.<sup>43</sup> It is self-evident that these “Six-Point-Cloud-People” have a tremendous influence upon Hopi everyday life.

When a Hopi dies,<sup>44</sup> the remains are prepared at once for burial. The preparations include washing, marking and dressing the body. The face is covered with a cotton mask and prayerfeathers are attached to the newly washed hair and the mask. The mask symbolizes the transformation of the departed spirit to a cloud: “This represented the billowy clouds that would hide his face whenever he returned to drop rain upon our parched lands.”<sup>45</sup>

Prayers are addressed to the dead one. The only Third Mesa prayer published is the following:

Well, dear Uncle, it is time for you to go.... I have dressed you for your journey to the House of the Dead. Lose no time in getting there. Our dear ones will welcome you gladly and show you to your special seat. Look after them as you have cared for us. Remember us and send rain. Visit us in December and sing the prayer songs again in our Soyal, for we still need your help. Be good and be wise in your future life.<sup>46</sup>

Prayers from First and Second Mesas emphasize the dead one’s transformation by bestowing a new name.

The spirit of the deceased, *hikwsi*, “breath,” leaves the grave on the fourth day after inhumation by way of a digging stick which has

been stuck into the surface of the grave for that purpose. Thus the *hikwsi* travels up a symbolic axis and is met by clouds which arrive to gather the *hikwsi* up and accompany it to Sipaapuni. The *hikwsi* then descends along the Axis through Sipaapuni to Maski. This route travelled from axial center to Axial Center reminds us significantly of the Sun's daily circuit. And, as the prayer quoted above indicates, the spirit regularly returns as a rainbearing cloud. Our data, however, falls short when we attempt to clarify how the deceased spirit ends up as a denizen of the Astrosphere poles, for such must be the case if the Chiefs are to be Chiefs over anyone.

This return to the Underworld clearly underlines the concept of Opposing Worlds. On the one hand, World/Underworld and on the other hand, the two World Centers, Orayvi/Sipaapuni, which lie in horizontal opposition to each other.

Titiev has investigated many of the elements which illustrate this duality,<sup>47</sup> but with liberal quotations from First Mesa and almost nothing from Third Mesa, an unfortunate circumstance in a book about Orayvi on Third Mesa. A case in point is Titiev's reference to a First Mesa tradition which relates that deaths in the Underworld result in births in this World and vice versa. But, as F. Eggan pointed out, his Orayvi material points to a belief in the female deity Taalawtumsi, who controls births and sends children. She carries all babies as little wooden images in Her womb. When women desire children, Taalawtumsi sends these little images into the womb of the respective woman.<sup>48</sup> Such an important contribution to an understanding of Third Mesa conceptions does not harmonize with Titiev's synthesis.

Communication and exchange between these two worlds forms the backdrop for quite a few rituals. One example is found in Talayesva's account of his pilgrimage to Sipaapuni. A cornmeal path is made near the water-covered entrance to the Underworld. This path becomes "the main road that the Six-Point-Cloud-People travel when they emerge from the sipapu to bring rain to the Hopi. They ascend into the air at this spot, look eastward and go to the farms of the most worthy people."<sup>49</sup>

What we find here is that the ideas concerning the Afterlife integrates and makes use of the cosmographical systems given by the Emergence Mythology, i.e., World Axis, World Center and Op-

posing Worlds. Furthermore, the Ancestor ideology invests Sipaapuni with semantic dimensions other than those of cosmography. It is now the source of life-giving water and a place of eschatological importance. The eschatological importance is of another kind than that of the Emergence, i.e., that of the fate of each individual spirit.

As we noted earlier, Emergence Mythology also operates with another World Center, apart from Sipaapuni. Once again it is the Ancestors who provide a key to an understanding of the mythological evidence.

It was shown that the Clan Migration Myths serve as a cosmographic, urbanographic, sociographic and agripolitical geographic justification of Orayvi's importance and the clans of that village. Besides all of that, Orayvi has also earned a eschatological status, which closely follows that of the Emergence. The Hopi are presently awaiting the immanent End of the World, termed *Nuutungk Talöngvaqa*, "The Last Morning." It is firmly believed that Hopiland will become the regenerated Center of the World after the catastrophes. In this connection, Orayvi will become the stepping-stone from this World to the next. There is therefore an affinity between the eschatological expectations attached to Orayvi and the eschatological expectations which the assembled Chiefs in the Third World attached to the spot where they planted the cane reed.

Apart from their expectations, the Hopi consider their particular Mesa village as being the Center of the World, especially in relationship to the many ancestors who live on as invisible guardians of the boundaries of Hopiland. Thus the Center as opposed to the Periphery is one of the basic characteristics of this spatial model.

Pilgrimages are made to the various ruins which Hopi Clan Migration Mythology lays claim to, and which are guarded by the above-mentioned clan ancestors. In the past, it seems, individuals from the respective clans made journies to the former homes of their ancestors in order to keep an eye on the ruins, to keep the spirits alive as boundary guardians *and* to notify them whenever major ceremonials were to be performed at home. This peregrinal activity was effectively hindered by Navajo and other hostile tribes. In 1974, however, a group of religious leaders from Second and Third

Mesas instituted a pilgrimage along the route of the most sacred clan sites which they believe mark the aboriginal boundary of Hopiland.<sup>50</sup>

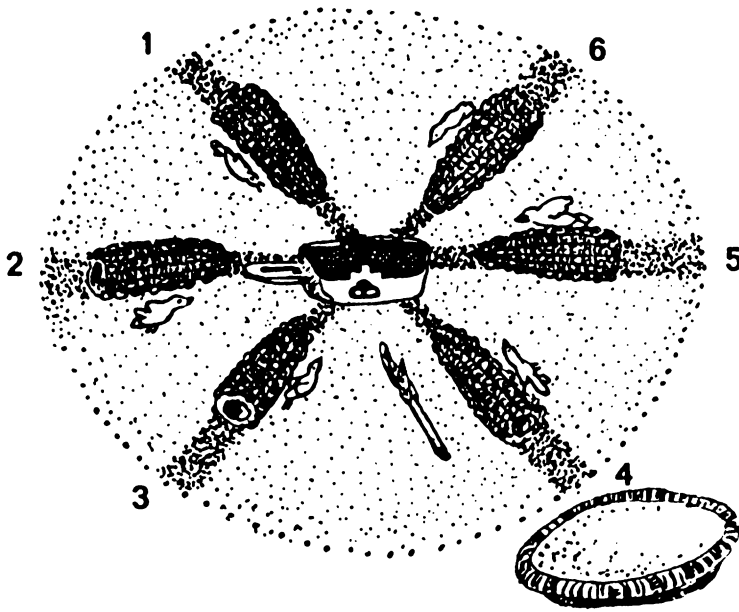
Aside from the political motives involved, this form for ritual has once again integrated a system where the Center and Periphery are activated. Of interest here is the fact that Sipaapuni is one of the places visited as a boundary marker (at least symbolically visited, since the trail down to the Colorado River is useless now), thus emphasizing not only Hopiland as the Center but also Sipaapuni as a place on the Periphery.

5.b. *Beings of the Astrosphere and Numeral Symbolism in Ritual*

During the major ceremonials one finds that the Hopi place great attention upon the Beings of the Astrosphere. During the formal announcement of the ceremonial, these spirits are specifically invoked.<sup>51</sup> This is usually followed by a *naanan'i'vopongyawimi*, "all directions altar ritual," also known as *naanan'i'votungwa*, "name all the directions."<sup>52</sup> As the illustration of the smaller Powamuy altar indicates, the medicine bowl rests upon three intersecting lines of cornmeal. The bowl is generally rectangular in shape with painted cloud symbols on the outer sides and frogs and tadpoles painted on the inner sides. Starting from the north(west) line and moving sinistrally, the Medicine Priest places the proper color maize ear, with its tip towards the center, at each of the six directional lines radiating from the bowl. The illustration shows that the axial lines (zenith/nadir) cross diagonally through the cardinal lines. Next to each maize ear are placed birdskins of the corresponding color. In other ceremonials, the Priest will also place stones, feathers, weapon points, tubes, aspergills and other utensils, all with the proper color.

Water is then poured into the bowl from each direction. The water has been retrieved from a spring waterhole at which the Spirits of the Directions are invoked. The spring here serves as a surrogate water-covered Sipaapuni. The spirits at the spring are offered to, whistled to, spoken to, and given a meal-road to travel upon so they can follow the water carrier right up to the altar.

After the spring water is poured into the bowl, clouds of smoke are blown at the altar and into the bowl. The smoke signifies and at



Powamuy Medicine Altar: 1. *kwiniwiq*, “north(west)”—yellow, 2. *teevenge*, “(south)west”—blue/green, 3. *atkyamiq*, “nadir”—grey, 4. *taatöq*, “south(east)”—red, 5. *hoopog*, “north(east)”—white and 6. *oomiq*, “zenith”—black. Redrawn by Bente Østergård from H. R. Voth 1901, plate XLIX.

the same time activates real clouds. Then cornmeal is sprinkled again *from* the six directions toward the bowl, to the accompaniment of songs sung to each direction. The Priest also sticks a bone whistle into the water from each direction and blows. This also occurs to the accompaniment of song. He also asperges water six times towards the bowl along the cornmeal lines. All of these activities are meant to bring the spirits thither.

The spatial orientation of these ritual movements are “centripetal” and not, as Hieb would have it, “centrifugal.”<sup>53</sup> The reason for this movement towards the Center is, in my opinion, that the water from the surrogate Sipaapuni (the water-hole) transforms the medicine altar to a surrogate Sipaapuni as well. In this manner, the altar becomes a ritualized World Center. And thus all of the rain-bearing powers are invited towards the new ritual Center, as to a surrogate homestead.

This medicine altar ritual is one of many religious actions which pay strict heed to the Astrosphere Orientation. Perusal of Voth's reports and the many songs he recorded illustrate the endless repetition of the number six, and emphasize that ritual movement is always towards the Center.

Emphasis upon the Center lies also in the village layout as well as in the architecture of the *kiva*. The village is built around an inner courtyard or plaza. In the center of that plaza is an altar, *pahoki*, "prayer-stick house," for making offerings to the spirits and deities which attend the religious dances in the plaza. The *kiva*, on the other hand, is specifically patterned after Emergence ideology, where the main entrance is through the roof, an inner world which is connected by a ladder to the upperworld. The symbolism is further enhanced by the fact that most *kivas* are underground chambers. This means that the participants symbolically enter the womb of the earth whenever they descend the *kiva* ladder, a symbolism which is purposely dramatized during the all-important Wuwtsim Ceremonial.

Each *kiva* has, as noted above, a *sipaapuni* of its own, somewhere near the center of the *kiva* floor. Offerings are placed in this hole and the spirits and deities of the Underworld are invoked through the hole.

##### 5.c. *The Astrosphere and the Katsina Cult*

The Tuuwanasavi evidence introduces a discrepancy in the ritual as well as the cosmographic context. Tony Hillerman's interpretation of the meaning of Tuuwanasavi is unsatisfactory. His postulate is not supported by the mythological evidence.

We must look elsewhere in search of an explanation for the existence of Tuuwanasavi in Hopi cosmography. Once again we find integration through the ritual context. During the Powamuy Ceremonial, the children of a certain age group are initiated into the Katsina Cult in the form of an ordeal. Shortly before the ordeal, the children and their parents gather into the *kiva*. Suddenly a masked figure descends the *kiva* ladder. This person represents Muy'ingwa Himself. The assembled parents then ask Him where He came from, and he replies: "*Yangqw, Tuuwanasangaqw nu' pitu.*" ("From yonder, from Tuuwanasavi, I arrived.") Then he holds a

long speech where he describes all of the places he has visited on the way to the *kiva*. He relates how he has travelled the *four cardinal roads*, and that he has visited the many Katsina Chiefs in their homes. He concludes: "Here these Oraibi children, little girls, little boys, of various sizes, here at the *sipapu* they shall know our ceremonies. Yes, they shall know them. Beautiful ladder beam, beautiful ladder rungs, fastened to the ladder with turquoise. Thus we came out."<sup>54</sup> After this divine benediction, the children are whipped in order to cleanse their spirits.

This speech indicates that the entire context, including the spatial one, of *Muy'ingwa* is of a different order than *Sipaapuni* ideology. In fact, it seems that *Tuuwanasavi* is central to the *Katsina* ideology. It is very important to realize that the numeral four is fundamental to the *Katsina* Cult as opposed to the numeral six of the Ceremonials.

The numeral four is further accentuated by the belief that the *Katsinas* live at four cardinal extended homes: *Nuvatukya'ovi* (San Francisco Peaks) to the (south)west, *Kiisiwu* (a spring) to the (north)east, *Weenima* (near Safford or Springerville) to the south(east) and *Kaawestima* (Betatakin Ruins) to the north.<sup>55</sup> Worshipers send their representatives to these places to get spruce branches<sup>56</sup> and water for ritual use during a *Katsina* Dance or certain Ceremonials.

Therefore, in my opinion, we can isolate two independent Axial/Central systems in Hopi cosmology: 1. *Sipaapuni* on the one hand, whose main characters are *Maasaw* and the Ancestors, and 2. *Tuuwanasavi* on the other hand, whose main characters are *Muy'ingwa* and the *Katsinas*.<sup>57</sup>

Most researchers have overlooked the ritual function of the Ancestors mainly because the greater interest has been for the *Katsina* Cult. This colorful Masked Dance Cult arrived in Hopiland via the Eastern Pueblos at a relatively recent time. *Katsinas* are associated with rain, springs and waterholes, but have a subservient role in many instances. This is so, in my opinion, because there already was a group of Beings who vouchsafed such matters, namely, the Ancestors.

Attempts to elicit lines of demarcation between the *Katsinas*, the Ancestors, and the animal and nature spirits prove to be hopeless.<sup>58</sup>

And it is exactly this state of affairs which supports the evidence concerning the recent introduction of the Katsina Cult. A striking example is the simultaneous worship of the Great God Maasaw and a dual Katsina counterpart, Masawkatsinat.

There are many instances in which attempts to incorporate the Katsina Cult in mythology and the Ceremonial cycles are evident. The fact that the Katsina Cult ideology is brought into focus during the Powamuy Ceremonial is a clear example of this attempt to coordinate the two ideologies. Another example is the myth about the introduction of the Katsina Cult.<sup>59</sup> The straightforward narrative shows that the Cult is assumed to be an import.

Concerning the division of the Ceremonial Year which most authors insist upon—January to July belonging to the Katsina Cult and August to December belonging to the Non-Masked Cult—it is in the first place not an exact division of the year, nor is it strictly adhered to on any of the Mesas. One finds, for example, the use of Katsinas for the greater part of the year on Third Mesa, depending upon the circumstances.

I believe that the theoretical distinction in this paper of those cosmographic elements which belong to the Ancestors and the Katsinas respectively, because of disparate semantic premises, is justified on the basis of the mythological, ritual and geographical facts. But we must not be led to believe that these groups are strictly found at all times even on Third Mesa. The astrospherical model is used in several other contexts than mentioned here, and can be found as well in the Katsina Cult, even though the emphasis is on the cardinal system.

On the other hand, the use of the number four is also used outside of the Katsina Cult, in many different ways. The Hopi use of the Four Worlds, the four stages of life for maize and humans, and the fact that the ceremonial day-count is a combination of four are just a few examples. But these uses of the number four do not have their roots in cosmography, rather in the very widespread use of that numeral on the American continent.

There are many reasons for the assimilation of these several systems into the Hopi religion. The Hopi have had a long religio-historical development with important influences from diverse sources. An attempt to delineate these stages is hampered by the

lack of concrete evidence. I think that on the basis of the archaeological evidence, one can safely postulate four main periods in the development of Hopi religion: the Desert Culture Period in the Utaztecan homeland, the Desert Culture Period in the Great Basin region, the Transition Period from Desert Culture to Pueblo Culture in and around the Grand Canyon, and finally, the Pueblo Culture Period on the Hopi Mesas. Each of these periods has contributed to the semantics and morphology of the Hopi religion. This hypothetical religio-historical development should not be understood in a purely unilinear sense. In an area as complex as the Pueblos, one can expect to find multilinear developments as well as none at all. But changing conditions have certainly left their mark. A more detailed study of this problem will be taken up elsewhere.

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This article is a revised English translation of a Danish paper. I wish to thank the Danish Council of the Humanities which has provided funds for my field trips (1978-1979, 1982) and made the subsequent processing of my field material possible. Thanks as well for financial support from A. Martin Geertz, Audrey G. Jedinak and Mr. and Mrs. Willy Jørgensen. Among my informants and friends, a sincere word of thanks to the Namingha family, especially Rebecca, Warren and the recently deceased Sydney Jr., to George Nasafti, Percy Lomakwahu, Herschel Talashoma, and my colleague and friend Michael Lomatuway'ma.

The orthographic system used here has been developed by Dr. Ekkehart Malotki, Northern Arizona University. In his book (1978, pp. 201 ff., noted below) are listed the symbols used here. According to this system, long vowels are simply doubled and the glottal is marked '. I have consistently written the Hopi Village names phonetically because many of the "accepted" spellings are incorrect.

<sup>1</sup> E. Malotki, *Hopi-Raum. Eine sprachwissenschaftliche Analyse der Raumvorstellungen in der Hopi-Sprache* (Tübingen, 1979).

<sup>2</sup> C. Mindeleff, "Localization of Tusayan Clans," *Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* (Washington, 1900) and S. A. Stubbs, *A Bird's-Eye View of the Pueblos* (Norman, 1950).

<sup>3</sup> R. M. Bradfield, *The Changing Pattern of Hopi Agriculture* (London, 1971) and C. D. Forde, "Hopi Agriculture and Land Ownership," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 61 (1931): 357-405.

<sup>4</sup> F. H. Ellis, "Pueblo Boundaries and Their Markers," *Plateau* 38 (1966): 97-106; M. Titiev, "The Influence of Common Residence on the Unilateral Classification of Kindred," *American Anthropologist* 45 (1943): 511-530; and "The Importance of Space in Primitive Kinship," *American Anthropologist* 58 (1956): 854-865.

<sup>5</sup> M. Titiev, *Old Oraibi. A Study of The Hopi Indians of Third Mesa*, Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, Vol. XXII, No. 1 (Cambridge, 1944), pp. 173 ff.

<sup>6</sup> L. A. Hieb, *The Hopi Ritual Clown: Life As It Should Not Be*, Princeton University Ph. D. Diss. (1972), pp. 79, 118, and "Hopi World View," in *Southwest*, Handbook of North American Indians Volume 9, ed., A. Ortiz (Washington, 1979), pp. 577 ff.

<sup>7</sup> R. M. Bradfield, *A Natural History of Associations. A Study in the Meaning of Community* (London, 1973), Vol. II, p. 256. See especially his, in my opinion, unsuccessful attempts to explain away Maasaw's association with the Underworld in Vol. II, p. 258.

<sup>8</sup> A. Ortiz, *The Tewa World: Space, Time, Being, and Becoming in a Pueblo Society* (Chicago and London, 1969).

<sup>9</sup> E. Durkheim and M. Mauss, "De quelques formes primitives de classification. Contribution à l'étude des représentations collectives," *L'Année Sociologique* Sixième Année (1901-1902), pp. 34-45, see esp. p. 44 n. 4. (Engl. ed., London, 1963, 1970, pp. 42-55).

<sup>10</sup> Claude Lévi-Strauss, *La Pensée Sauvage* (Paris, 1962), pp. 55-56 (Eng. ed., pp. 40-41) and Bradfield 1973 Vol. II, pp. 92-93.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. my comments in "The Sa'lakwmanawyat Sacred Puppet Ceremonial among the Hopi Indians in Arizona: A Preliminary Investigation," *Anthropos* 77 (1982), p. 165; "Book of the Hopi: the Hopis' Book?," *Anthropos* 78 (1983): 547-556; and my forthcoming *Of Spirit and Wood. Sacred Puppet Ceremonials of the Hopi Indians*.

<sup>12</sup> Mennonite H. R. Voth's many studies of Hopi ceremonials from the end of the last century are admirable because of his impressive collection of eyewitness data and his excellent knowledge of the Hopi language. See for example his "The Oraibi Powamu Ceremony," *Field Columbian Museum Publication* 61, *Anthropological Series* 3 No. 2 (Chicago, 1901): 60-158 (hereafter: *FCMP* 61, *AS* 3 No. 2); "The Oraibi Summer Snake Ceremony," *FCMP* 83, *AS* 3 No. 4 (Chicago, 1903): 262-358; "The Oraibi Oáqöl Ceremony," *FCMP* 84, *AS* 6 No. 1 (Chicago, 1903): 1-46; *The Traditions of the Hopi*, *FCMP* 96, *AS* 8 (Chicago, 1905); and "The Oraibi Maraw Ceremony," *FCMP* 156, *AS* 11 No. 1 (Chicago, 1912): 1-88.

Of all the known Hopi researchers at the time, including such big names as J. W. Fewkes and Alexander M. Stephen, Voth is the only one who was fluent in Hopi. Harold Courlander's criticism of Voth in *Hopi Voices* (Albuquerque, 1982), p. xviii, on the basis of his supposed faulty knowledge of the language is a parody coming from a man who not only recorded only in English but has produced "composite" narrative collections of Hopi as well as other native peoples. A small knowledge of the Hopi language, difficult as it is, and the briefest acquaintance with Voth's texts and manuscripts are enough to discredit Courlander's opinion. Cf. H. C. James, *Pages From Hopi History* (Tucson, 1974, 2nd pr. 1976), pp. 147-158 for a more sympathetic view of Voth's missionary activities.

<sup>13</sup> See B. L. Whorf's selected writings in *Language, Thought, and Reality*, ed., J. B. Carroll (Cambridge, 1956, 12th pr. 1976). Works highly critical of Whorf are H. Gippur, *Gibt es ein sprachliches Relativitätsprinzip?* (Frankfurt am Main, 1972); E. Malotki 1979; E. Malotki, "Spatio-Temporale Metaphorik im Bereich der Pronominal-lokatoren der Hopi-Sprache," in *Integrale Linguistik*, ed., E. Bülow and P. Schmitter (Amsterdam, 1979), pp. 493-518; and *Hopi Time* (The Hague, 1983).

<sup>14</sup> At this time efforts are being made to encourage scientific studies through the medium of information expressed in the native language by E. Sekaquaptewa, M. Lomatuway'ma, E. Malotki and myself.

<sup>15</sup> Voth 1901, pp. 127-153.

<sup>16</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 134, where he notes that the order given is different according to other informants, and elsewhere, for example, pp. 99 ff. where we find for the west alone red, white and all-colors cornseeds and where beans, watermelons and muskmelons are found at all the cardinal points, as opposed to Bradfield's chart.

<sup>17</sup> Reel Signature 5 + 15.3.1.477-2.190 and 6.1.1.000-400. All references to "Reel Signature" are to my own unpublished taped material recorded in 1978-1979.

<sup>18</sup> E. S. Goldfrank, "The Impact of Situation and Personality on Four Hopi Emergence Myths," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 4 (1948): 241-262.

<sup>19</sup> The following references note the Chiefs and leaders involved, their village of origin, the date recorded and publication data: Lomahongyiwwa, Orayvi, 1883, F. H. Cushing, "Origin Myth From Oraibi," *Journal of American Folklore* 36 (1924): 163-170; Yukiwma, Orayvi, later Chief of Hotvela, 1903 or 1904, H. R. Voth 1905, pp. 16-26 and in 1911 published in L. Crane, *Indians of the Enchanted Desert* (New York, 1925), pp. 163-167; Chief Tawakwaptiwa, Orayvi, 1933 (a condensed version of his uncle Chief Loloma), Titiev 1944, pp. 73-74, and during the late 1930's to H. C. James, "Haliksai!" *El Centro* (1940), pp. 9-12, published in a more detailed version in James 1974, pp. 2-8; Dan Qötshongva, son of Yukiwma, Hotvela, 1970, T. V. Tarbet, Jr., ed., *From the Beginning of Life to the Day of Purification*, translated by Danaqyumptiwa (Los Angeles, 1972, rev. ed. 1977), pp. 1-7, the same version being published in Dan Katchongva, *Hopi. A Message For All People*, Akwesasne Notes edition (Ithaca, 1973, 1975), pp. 3-6; Thomas Banyancya, interpreter for Dan Qötshongva, Kiqötsmovi, 1961 letter to M. Muller-Fricken in Germany, R. O. Clemmer, *Continuities of Hopi Culture Change* (Ramona, 1978), pp. 47-48. The version told by Don Talayesva to L. W. Simmons in *Sun Chief. The Autobiography of a Hopi Indian* (New Haven, 1942, 1974), pp. 418-420 is most likely taken from Voth, a trick which Talayesva used in several other places in Simmons's book. The only version which does not belong to the political figures named above and which is accepted here as Third Mesa evidence is the Orayvi version collected in 1870 by Major J. W. Powell and published in *The Hopi Villages* (1875, rpr. Palmer Lake, 1972), pp. 24-25. F. Waters' version in *Book of the Hopi* (New York, 1963, 1971) is rejected here on the grounds that it is a synthetic, pan-Mesa retelling concocted by Waters, Oswald White Bear Fredericks and Otto Penttiwa (cf. A. W. Geertz 1983). Waters' version is completely atypical of Hopi mythology in almost every way, but particularly by the fact that there is no Emergence from the Third World here. Courlander's version in *The Fourth World of the Hopis* (Greenwich, 1971, 1972) is equally disqualified because it is a synthetic retelling of versions from all three Mesas and from various clans.

<sup>20</sup> Powell 1875 and Cushing 1924.

<sup>21</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 24.

<sup>22</sup> My text, Reel Signature 5 + 15.3.1.477-2.190, recorded on April 1979, is from one of the two initiates of the last Wuwtsim Ceremonial in Hotvela, which was held sometime during the 1950's. He was initiated into the Kwan Society and is therefore a member of the all-important Kwankiva. This version is in most respects identical to the other published versions. It should be noted here that divergences in these versions center upon topics of political importance such as the order of ascent during the Emergence by clan, the order of arrival to Orayvi by

clan, the strengths and weaknesses peculiar to each clan according to tradition and last but not least the precise prophetic words of Maasaw. There are especially many versions and interpretations of the prophecy. During hearings held by a delegation from the U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs during 1955 concerning land and livestock conflicts, at least fifty Hopi speakers began one after the other by referring to the Emergence Myth. However, they jumped over the actual Emergence and focussed upon the arrival to Hopiland and upon the words of Maasaw, these two topics having such political importance. Each speaker had his own version to tell! See Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Hopi Hearings July 15-30, 1955* (Keams Canyon, 1955, mimeograph copy).

<sup>23</sup> E. Malotki, personal communication 1979.

<sup>24</sup> M. Eliade, *Le Chamanisme et les Techniques Archaïques de L'extase* (Paris 1951), pp. 235 ff. (cf. the English ed. London, 1964, 1970, pp. 259 ff.) and *Traité d'Histoire des Religions* (Paris 1959), pp. 232 ff. (cf. the English ed. London, 1958, 1971, pp. 265 ff).

<sup>25</sup> Eliade 1959, p. 321 (1958, p. 375). It must be noted here that even though the Hopi do have a hell for the most recalcitrant witches and sorcerers, it is not cosmographically linked to the Sipaapuni Axis, rather to a mountain. That little known axial model will not be investigated here.

<sup>26</sup> F. B. Eiseman, Jr., "The Hopi Salt Trail," *Plateau* 32 (1959), p. 27. See photo page 28.

<sup>27</sup> See Malotki 1979, p. 214: "Ende des festen Landes, Ende der Welt" and sentence 977: *pam tuuwaqalpeq pituma* "Er war einmal am Ende der Welt," and Malotki 1983, p. 431.

<sup>28</sup> Tony Hillerman wrote of a "Hopi Theology" which "tells us that this ragged south end of Black Mesa is *Tuuwanasavi*—the Center of the Universe." ("The Hopi Migrations. Journey to the Center of the Universe," *Arizona Highways* 56, Sept. 1980, p. 10.) Voth mentions this place as "Tūwashave" in "The Oraibi Owáqöl Ceremony", p. 27 n. 3, and "Towanashabee" in 1901, p. 102 n. 1 and p. 119, and 1912, p. 77 n.l.

<sup>29</sup> Voth 1905, pp. 169-172.

<sup>30</sup> A *kiva* is the meeting house of the Secret Society. During Ceremonials, the *kiva* constitutes a sacred place equivalent to a church. Two significant architectural features of the *kiva* are that it is entered through a hole in the center of the roof. And in the center of the *kiva* floor one finds a hole which is called a *sipaapuni*. The *kiva* is obviously a model of the Hopi concept of plural worlds. Cf. my comments in my forthcoming *Of Spirit and Wood*, chapter six.

<sup>31</sup> Voth 1905, p. 171.

<sup>32</sup> Signature 3.6.2.049-605, recorded at Hotvela on February 20, 1979. A Danish translation of this myth will soon be published in a popularized collection: *Drengen og Ørnene: En Hopi-Bedstemoder Fortæller*. Malotki has published a different version of this myth from Paaqavi in his *Hopitutuwułsi Hopi Tales. A Bilingual Collection of Hopi Indian Stories* (Flagstaff, 1978). On page 159 he quotes the boy's song as he and the eagle rise to the heavens; *Haa'o ingu'u, ina'a! Haa'o ingu'u, ina'a! Tuuwanasave'e itaa'uyiy epe'e, silaquuyata tutuvena. Aya'aa'ay tutuvena. Tutuvena, tutuvena, tutuvena*. "Listen, my mother, my father! Listen my mother, my father! At Earth Center on our cornfield its husks he marked. *Aya'aa'ay* he marked. He marked, he marked, he marked."

<sup>33</sup> Voth 1905, pp. 1-5, told by Qöyawayma of Orayvi; Talayesva's account in Simmons 1942, pp. 416-418 is the same as Qöyawayma's. This Sun Mythology is also found in the synthetic accounts of Waters 1963 and Courland 1971, but are

again different than the version in Voth. It should be noted here that the parallel existence of Emergence Mythology and Solar Mythology is also found on First and Second Mesas.

<sup>34</sup> Voth 1905, p. 1 n. 2. His conclusion is based upon the root *huru*, "hard, fast." Cf. J. Epp, *Small Hopi-English Dictionary*, unpubl. ms. Oraibi, ca. 1916, and C. F. Voegelin and F. M. Voegelin, *Hopi Domains* (Bloomington, 1957, rpr. Chicago, 1974), B12.

<sup>35</sup> Besides several unpublished versions which I and others have collected, there is only one published version from Third Mesa found in James 1940, pp. 14-15 and 1974, pp. 18-22. Voth's (1905, pp. 30-36) two versions are unfortunately both from Second Mesa. The Snake Dance and its myth seems to belong to the First Mesa groups.

<sup>36</sup> Signature 11.10-11.11.1.234, recorded March 20, 1979 at Paakavi, Third Mesa.

<sup>37</sup> There are many published tales about the Pöqanghoyas, but the only published bilingual texts are in Malotki's (1978) Third Mesa material.

<sup>38</sup> See A. M. Stephen's First Mesa evidence: "Hopi Tales," *Journal of American Folklore* 42 (1929), pp. 10-14, 15-20. According to Malotki 1978, p. 206, the Hopi do not consider them as being twins.

<sup>39</sup> A. W. Geertz, *Fundamental Methodological Problems With Particular References to Cults and Myths Associated With the Investigation of the Religion of the Hopi Indians*, Magisterial Thesis (Aarhus University, 1977), Fascicle B, Part III, pp. 209-223.

<sup>40</sup> Malotki 1979, p. 205 sentence 927 and p. 325 n. 150.

<sup>41</sup> Voth 1905, pp. 157-159.

<sup>42</sup> Simmons 1942, pp. 52, 57, 59, 88.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 177.

<sup>44</sup> This section is based upon Voth, "Brief Miscellaneous Hopi Papers," *Field Museum of Natural History* 157, AS 11 No. 2 (Chicago, 1912), pp. 99-103 and Simmons 1942, pp. 256-257, 313-316.

<sup>45</sup> Simmons 1942, p. 313, also p. 256.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 313.

<sup>47</sup> Titiev 1944, pp. 171 ff.

<sup>48</sup> F. Eggan, *Social Organization of the Western Pueblos* (Chicago, 1950, 6th impr. 1973), p. 47. Eggan is one of the few who actually stipulates from which Mesa he draws his material.

<sup>49</sup> Simmons 1942, p. 241.

<sup>50</sup> There are short articles about this Boundary Pilgrimage in the Hopi newspaper *Qua' Töqti*: "Pilgrimage to Shrines Returns," October 19, 1978 and "Hopi Priesthood Leaders make Shrine Pilgrimage," October 23, 1980. One can also read about this pilgrimage in J. Page and S. Page, "Inside the Sacred Hopi Homeland," *National Geographic* 162 (November 1982), pp. 606-629, and in their *Hopi* (New York, 1982), pp. 218-224.

<sup>51</sup> Third Mesa invocations can be found in Voth, "The Oraibi Summer Snake Ceremony," pp. 277-278 and "The Oraibi Oáqöl Ceremony," pp. 8-9.

<sup>52</sup> Terms which I have not been able to elicit on Third Mesa. The only term I happened to elicit was *pongyalalwa*, "they are building the altar." However, I am sure that the medicine altar has a name.

<sup>53</sup> Hieb 1979, p. 578.

<sup>54</sup> Voth 1901, p. 156. The whole text is found on pp. 155-157 and Voth's translation on pp. 99-102.

<sup>55</sup> See my comments in A. W. Geertz 1982, p. 173.

<sup>56</sup> See Arlette Frigout's investigation of the use of spruce among the Hopi in "Le Repos des Nuages," in *Échanges et Communications*, ed., J. Pouillon and P. Maranda (The Hague, 1970), Vol. I, pp. 100-114. Her article on Hopi ceremonial space is not of use here, since it is only a collection of loose observations: "L'espace cérémoniel des Indiens Hopi (Arizona - Etats Unis)," in *XXXVI Congreso Internacional de Americanistas España 1964. Actas Y Memorias. Vol. 3* (Sevilla, 1966), pp. 465-470.

<sup>57</sup> Muy'ingwa plays an important role on First Mesa. But He is so much confused with the Fertility Deity from Antelope Mesa, Aalo'saka, that it is difficult to separate the two. See H. Hartmann, "Alosaka und Musingwa," *Baessler-Archiv* n.f. XXIII (Berlin, 1975), pp. 293-346. It is of special interest to note that on First and Second Mesas, there are traditions which name Muy'ingwa as the child of Huru'ingwuuuti (cf. Voth 1905, p. 8). In this tradition, there is only one Huru'ingwuuuti who is figured in contrast to the Sun.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. E. Earle and E. A. Kennard, *Hopi Kachinas* (New York, 1938, 2nd rev. ed. 1971), p. 4.

<sup>59</sup> Voth 1905, pp. 63-65.

## SEELENBRÜCKE UND BRÜCKENBAU IM MITTELALTERLICHEN ENGLAND

PETER DINZELBACHER und HARALD KLEINSCHMIDT

“Der religiöse Mensch hat oft das Gefühl gehabt, daß ein breiter und tiefer Strom seine Welt von der Welt der Gottheit trennte. Aber er wußte zu gleicher Zeit, daß es Verbindungen zwischen Erde und Himmel gab. Das interessanteste Symbol dieser Verbindung ist die Brücke.”

Claas Jouco Bleeker: *The Sacred Bridge*. Leiden 1963. S. 180 (Numen suppl. 7.)

In der Erzbischof Wulfstan von York († 1023) zugeschriebenen Predigt *Larspell*<sup>1</sup> beschwört der Homilet die Plagen des Jüngsten Gerichts und deutet dabei an, daß es möglich sei, durch Almosen-gaben im Diesseits den Weg der Seele ins Jenseits sicherer zu gestalten. Dabei führt der Homilet im einzelnen an:

“wa ðæs mannes sawle, þe betynð his duru ongean godes þearfan for ðam þingon, þæt hine lærð se deofol; swa him bið betyned heofona rices duru ongean on domes dæge. ac beon we æfre cumliðe; ure sawel bið Cristes cuma on þam forhtigendan domes dæge. utan lufjan ure cyrican, forðam heo bið, ure friðjend and werigend wið þæt micle fyr on domes dæg. and wyrcean we simle brycge and þa betan. ðeah se man nime ænne stan and legce on fül sloh, þæt se ælmesman mæge mid þam oðrum fet steppan on ða clænan healfe, þæt him bið micel ælmesse and micel med for gode. eac beðearf seo sawel on domes dæg rihtes weges and clænes and staðolfæstre brycge ofer þone glideran weg hellewites brogan.”<sup>2</sup>

Der Verfasser stellt damit den Brückenbau in karitativem Zusammenhang dar. Dadurch wird die Frage aufgeworfen, in welchem Bezug diese Stelle einmal zum Vorstellungskomplex der Jenseitsbrücke, wie er namentlich in den Visionen auftritt, zum anderen zum Brückenbau und den diesen begleitenden rechts- und sozialgeschichtlichen Phänomenen steht.

Das Schicksal der Seele nach dem Tode hat die Menschen aller Epochen und Kulturen beschäftigt.<sup>3</sup> In vielen der Mythologien, denen zufolge die Seele in ein Jenseits (Himmel, Hölle) eingeht, muß sie erst, um dorthin zu gelangen, einen gefährvollen Weg zurücklegen. So auch in der christlichen Religion des Mittelalters, zwar

nicht in der offiziellen Lehre Roms, aber doch in der volksläufigen Tradition, die nun nicht gerade von einem Abaelard oder Thomas formuliert und geglaubt wurde, doch von vielen Priestern, Mönchen und Laien. Das zeigen die Autoren-, Überlieferungs- und Rezeptionsverhältnisse der Texte, in denen von der Seelenreise die Rede ist genauso wie die bildlichen Quellen.<sup>4</sup> Der wichtigste Teil dieses Weges ist in vielen Darstellungen die Brücke zu den Regionen des Paradieses. Meist kann sie leicht von den Seelen der Gerechten überschritten werden, währenddem die Seelen der Sünder in den unter ihr dräuenden Höllenpfuhl oder -fluß stürzen.<sup>5</sup> In der europäischen Literatur taucht diese Vorstellung etwa gleichzeitig bei den Heiligen Gregor v. Tours (*Historia Francorum* 4,33, beendet vor 577)<sup>6</sup> und Papst Gregor I. (*Dialogi* 4,37, um 593)<sup>7</sup> auf.

Für England wichtig ist weiter eine Schilderung in einem Brief des hl. Bonifatius (ca. 717).<sup>8</sup> Im Hochmittelalter mehrten sich die Berichte von der Totenbrücke speziell im Genus der Visionsliteratur,<sup>9</sup> wobei besonders die Erzählung in den *Dialogi* vorbildlich war. Dazu kommt nun der irische Traditionsstrang: Dort scheint die Vorstellung einer gefährlichen Brücke, die sich selbst bewegen kann, schon in der vorchristlichen Überlieferung bekannt gewesen zu sein;<sup>10</sup> verchristlicht kommt sie dann im altirischen *Fís Adamnáin* (10. Jh.?), dem *Tractatus de Purgatorio S. Patricii* (ca. 1185/90) und der *Visio Tnugdali* (1148) vor,<sup>11</sup> lateinischen Texten irischer Provenienz. Von letzterem nicht unbeeinflusst ist die nägelgespickte Brücke in der Vision des Bauern Thurkill, die er 1206 in der Nähe von Colchester erlebte.<sup>12</sup> In säkularisierter Form wurde der *pont périlleux* seit Chrétien de Troyes ein beliebtes Motiv der Artus-Literatur, an dem ein Ritter seine Kühnheit erproben konnte.<sup>13</sup>

Die eschatologische Brücke ist in der englischen Dichtung und Prosa des Mittelalters, verglichen mit den sonstigen Volkssprachen, besonders oft und vielfältig dargestellt worden. Dabei ergeben sich zwei Arten von Quellen:

1. Alt- und mittelenglische Texte, die nicht auf lateinischen Vorläufern fußen, sondern visionäres Erleben unmittelbar in der Sprache des Sehers festhalten, und
2. Texte, in denen eine lateinische Quelle übersetzt oder bearbeitet wird.
  1. In zeitlich nächster Nähe zu unserem Wulfstan-Text liegt hier

die Vision des Earls Leofric von Merzien (†1057). Sie ist nur in dem Ms. Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 367 (um 1100) tradiert, zusammen mit anderen Einzelzügen aus dem Leben dieses in vieler Hinsicht die christlichen Ideale vorbildlich erfüllenden Feudalherrn. Man erhält den Eindruck, diese Materialien seien für eine (nie in Angriff genommene oder verschollene) Heiligenvita des Stifters des Coventryer Marienmünsters gedacht gewesen.

“Her gesutelað on ða gesihðe ðe Leofric eorl gesæh. Him þuhte to soðan on healf-slapendon lichaman, na callinga swylce on swefne, ac gyt gewisslicor, þæt he sceolde nede ofer anc swiðe smale brige, 7 seo wæs swiþe lang, 7 þær arn swiðe feorr beneoðan egeslic wæter, swylce hit ea wære. Ða þa he mid þam gedræht wæs, þa cwæð him stefn to, ‘Ne forhta þu. Eaðe þu þa brige oferferest.’ Mid þam þa wearð he sona ofere, nyste he hu. Ða þa he ofere wæs, þa com him lateow ongean 7 hyne lædde to anum swyðe wlitigan felde 7 swyþe fægeran, mid swetan stence afylled.”<sup>14</sup>

Da Leofric kurz darauf den hl. Paulus erblickt, kann man vermuten, die Brückenvorstellung sei dem Earl durch die noch zu besprechende Visio Pauli in lateinischer Form oder eher in einer nicht erhaltenen ae. Übersetzung<sup>15</sup> bekannt geworden, doch ist wegen sonstiger Übereinstimmungen vielleicht eher an die ebenfalls gleich zu erwähnende Vision bei Gregor zu denken.<sup>16</sup>

Eine frappante Analogie zu jener in der eingangs zitierten Predigt ausgesprochenen Verknüpfung von irdischer und jenseitiger Brücke bietet aber erst eine der zahlreichen Schilderungen, die von Pilgern über ihre Erlebnisse in jener künstlichen Unterwelt, dem Purgatorium S. Patricii<sup>17</sup> auf einer Insel im Lough Derg (Ulster) verfaßt wurden. Schon in den wenigstens seit der Mitte des 12. Jahrhunderts kursierenden lateinischen Berichten über diese Bußgrotte ist von einer Brücke zum Paradies die Rede, welche nur die Gerechten passieren können.<sup>18</sup> 1406 oder 1409 stieg auch ein nicht weiter bekannter William (of) Staunton zum Fegfeuer des hl. Patricius hinab. Der uns interessierende Teil seiner Traumvision lautet:

“And þan seint Iohn led me forthe toward a water, the which was blak and fowle to sight; and yn thilk water were mony fendes, yellyng and making gresly noyse; and over þat water y saw a gret brygge and brode as me semed, and on þat brigge I saw a bisshop goyng and with him mony clerkes and diuers officers and many other mayne; and when he had go a good while on þat brigge, y saw fendes with grete strenghe pullung and teryng adown the pilers of þe brigge, and the bisshop sodaynly fallyng into þe water and his meyne

with him; and in the fallyng my thought y saw a bright angell takyng away the myter and the cros fro þe bisshop and vaneshid away/ And than y saw many diuers sowles and fendes among hem takyng þilk bisshop, teryng, drawyng, and plunchyng him in þat blak water/ And he suffred þerynne many diuers *turmentes* and moche woo/ And þan seint Iohn said, 'this was a bisshop which leved not wel to the plesyng of god as his degre and his astate asked; and therfore he is now payned *with* this diuers paynes. Þat brigge þat þow seist was a brigge þat he lete make in the world, whiles he was on lyve, for esement of þe comen people; but for as moche as he did it to be made principally for vaynglorie and also þe goodes þat it was made *with* weren falsliche goten, taken yerliche bi his office, gold and siluer, maynteyneng þe synne of moche people in lecherie, therfore god hath suffred þese fendes to draw down this brigge; for if it had be made *with* godes truelych goten, it shuld haue ystoundyn him now in grette stede.'<sup>19</sup>

Hier kommt der nämliche Gedanke zum Ausdruck wie in der ae. Homilie: eben die Brücke, die man im Leben auf Erden errichtet hat, muß man im Jenseits überschreiten; der irdischen Brücke entspricht geradezu typologisch eine solche in der anderen Welt: Sie wird für die Seele zum Instrument der Prüfung, ob sie den Eingang in die Gnadenstätten schon verdiene — was in anderer Tradition durch die Waage des hl. Michael festgestellt wird.<sup>20</sup> Daß hier gerade ein Priester diese Probe versucht (und scheitert), erinnert an ältere lateinische Visionen, in denen ebenfalls ein Kleriker auf der Testbrücke geschildert wird.<sup>21</sup>

Eine andere, zeitlich nahestehende Fegfeuervision, die eine Unbekannte 1422 ihrem Beichtvater erzählte (der sie offensichtlich sogleich aufzeichnete) enthält gleicherweise das Brückenmotiv, doch fehlt hier die über den weiteren Verbleib der Seele entscheidende Funktion des Übergangs. Zwischen Peinstätten und Gnadenorten befindet sich a stronge brygge, & at þe brygges ende was a faire white chapelle ...<sup>22</sup>

2. Die Hauptmasse der einschlägigen Texte bilden jedoch Darstellungen, die entweder eine lateinische Quelle wörtlich übersetzen oder eine freie Bearbeitung einer solchen sind. In jedem dieser beiden Fälle hatte die volkssprachliche Formulierung den Zweck, den jeweiligen Stoff auch nicht Lateinkundigen, also auch Laien, zugänglich zu machen. Die Vorstellung von der Brücke in die andere Welt wurde dadurch unvermeidlicherweise volksläufig, womit die Furcht vor ihr als Handlungsmotivation weiterer Kreise in Betracht kommt.

Zunächst einige Beispiele für direkte Übersetzungen aus dem

Lateinischen: Der älteste hierher gehörige Text dürfte die Übersetzung der *Dialogi* Gregors sein, die Bischof Waerferth v. Worcester vor 893 für seinen Freund König Alfred d. Gr. anfertigte. Sie hält sich an dieser Stelle genau an die lateinische Vorlage und schildert, was ein Visionär vom Jenseits sagt: “he cwæð ... þæt sum bryzc wære, *and* under þære urne swyþlice sweart *and* dim ea ... soðlice þeos cunnunȝ wæs in þære forecwedenan bryze, þat swa hwylc unrihtwisra manna swa wolde ofer þa feran, he sceolde aslidan þær ...”<sup>23</sup>

Auch der Brief, den der hl. Bonifatius an die Äbtissin Eadburga v. Thanet schrieb, liegt in ae. Übertragung vor. Er schildert die ca. 717 zu datierende Jenseitsvision eines schwerkranken Mönches aus dem Kloster Wenlock. Die Brücke, die er schaute, führt von dem nicht näher definierten Versammlungsort der Abgeschiedenen zum himmlischen Jerusalem:

“7 he þær zeseah fyren[e] éa sio wæs zefylled mid weallende pice. 7 hio wæs eall inneward byrnende. 7 hio wæs on wundorlicre fyrhtu. 7 þ[ær wæ]s an treow ofer þa éa on brycȝe onlicnysse. þonne efstan þa halȝan sawla [to þære] bricȝe fram þam zemote þe hiȝ æt wæron. 7 hiȝ ȝyrndon þæt hiȝ ofer foren þa éa. þonne ferdo[n] hiȝ sume swide anrædlice ofer þa bricȝe 7 sume hiȝ wurden aslidene of þam triowe þæt hiȝ befeollan in þa tintreȝan éa.”<sup>24</sup>

Damit sinddieae. Texte von der Jenseitsbrücke auch schon erschöpft, jedoch haben wir im Mittenglischen noch zahlreiche Beispiele sowohl für Übersetzungen als auch für freie Bearbeitungen. Viele Geschichten der Dialoge Papst Gregors sind in spätmittelalterliche Exempelsammlungen, auch die in den Volkssprachen, eingegangen, worunter sich auch die uns hier interessierende Erzählung befindet.<sup>25</sup> Sie figuriert z.B. im *Alphabet of Tales* (15. Jh.) unter der Überschrift: Paradisus. Paradisi disposicio:

“Saynt Gregur tellis how sum tyme at Rome þer was a knyght þat fell seke, & was evene bowne to dye & lay in a trans. And whene he come agayne vnto hyme selfe, he saidh þat he saw a bryg, and vnderneath it rane a grete blak watur at keste owte intollerable savurs & stynkis. And whene he was passidh þis brygg, one þe toder syde of þis watyr was fayr medows & grene, & full of gude flowris wele savurandh: And þer he saw a grete company of white mene in albys; [...] And þer was many habitacles apone þe banke of the same watir; and he saidh he saw many one þis brygg þat, þurgh felyng of þe ill savur one þe watur, þai fell in-to itt.”<sup>26</sup>

Die Übersetzung ist zunächst einigermaßen wörtlich, um zum Ende hin nur mehr in eine Paraphrase überzugehen.

Eine ganz freie Bearbeitung dagegen bietet *Handlyng Synne* des Robert v. Brunne (begonnen 1303). Sie basiert jedoch nicht of dem lateinischen Original, sondern einer anglonormannischen Version, die William v. Wadington zugeschrieben wird. Hier ist der aus seiner Ekstase zurückkehrende Krieger selbst redend eingeführt:

“ y sagh a brygge of mochē wndyr,  
A grymly watyr was þer vndyr,  
Blak and depe & ful stynkyngge,  
Dredeful noyse hyt made rynnynge.  
Dunward yn-to helle hyt zede;  
whan y sagh hyt, y hadde grete drede.  
Be-3unde þat brygge was a cuntre,  
Þe feyreste þat euer god lete be; [...]

y sagh þere folk of so feyr syghte,  
Here wonynge placys yn joye were dyghte;  
All þe folke þat I saghe þere  
were as feyre as aungelys were.  
y sagh þere housys of ful ryche atyre,  
Alle of gletryng golde as fyre; [...] <sup>27</sup>

Der Visionär sieht nun, wie die Seelen die Brücke überqueren, darunter einer

“As he wulde passe þe brygge, betydde,  
Hys fete begunne to slyde besyde,  
And, was yn poynt for to falle  
In-to þe watyr bytterer þan galle;  
Þe fendēs wende weyl hym to fonge,  
But by þe bregge þan gan he honge.  
Þe fendys here crokys fasted yn hys knees,  
And al to-drowe & rente hys þees;  
Feyr men come þedyr,—but y not how,—  
And by hys armys vp hym drow;  
Þey wulde þat suffre hym falle al downe  
In-to þat grete confucyoun;  
He plesyd god with sum gode dede,  
Þarefore þey hylpe hym yn hys nede.” <sup>28</sup>

Eine der folgenreichsten Schriften für die Herausbildung der abendländischen Eschatologie, namentlich der grauenhaften Unterweltvorstellungen, war eine neutestamentliche Apokryphe, die *Visio Pauli*. Der im 3. Jahrhundert in Ägypten entstandene griechische Text wurde in mindestens 12 verschiedenen lateinischen Bear-

beitungen im mittelalterlichen Westen verbreitet, die wiederum zahlreichen volkssprachlichen Versionen als Vorlagen dienten, so daß insgesamt noch ca. 200 Handschriften erhalten sind.<sup>29</sup> Läßt man die ae. und me. Fassungen der Paulusvision beiseite, welche auf einem lateinischen Text fußen, der die Brückenepisode nicht enthält — diese wurde nämlich erst in eine lateinische Variante des 12. Jahrhunderts eingefügt, was für die große Verbreitung dieser Vorstellung im Hochmittelalter spricht —, so sind vier me. Bearbeitungen bekannt, in denen der Apostel die Jenseitsbrücke zu sehen bekommt. In der stanzischen Version des späten 13. Jahrhunderts heißt es nur relativ kurz:

A ful heizh brugge and vnguod.  
Was maked ouer þat foule flod.  
To habbe redie passage.  
To laten þe guode soules pase.<sup>30</sup>

Von dort aus erblickt der Apostel die verschiedenen Sünder und ihre Strafen in der Hölle.

Wesentlich detaillierter ist dagegen die Schilderung des Vernon Ms. (unter dem Titel: *The XI Pains of Hell*):

“Aftur þat sayh he þer he stod  
A wondur orible. grisly flod;  
And in þat flod. say he þere  
Mony deueles bestes. were; [...]

Ouer þat watur. he say3 ligge  
A wondur long. and an heiz brugge  
And ouer þat brugge. saf goon þen  
þe soules. of good rihtful men,  
Wiþ-uten harm. of word. or dede,  
And also wiþ-uten. eny drede:  
    Pe soules of synnes., as I þe telle,  
Fallen doun þer, in pyne to dwelle, [...]

For eueri creature. go schal  
Bi þat brugge., sum or Al,  
And lasse or more, schal he be deruet  
Er-aftur he hap. heer deseruet:’ ”

Eine Prosafassung des 14. Jahrhunderts erwähnt im Unterschied dazu die Totenbrücke nur ganz kurz,<sup>32</sup> und auch der blinde Priester John Audley, der in der ersten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts in Hagmond Abbey (Shropsh.) wirkte, bringt in seiner Überset-

zung der (sog. IV.) lateinischen Version wenig Eigenständiges, sondern verkürzt den Text eher.<sup>33</sup> Man wird wohl annehmen dürfen, daß die Probebrücke bereits zu den weithin bekannten und erwarteten Prüfungen der Seele im Jenseits zählte.

Besonders beliebt bei den Verfassern englischer Bearbeitungen lateinischer Berichte über die Reiche der Toten war der *Tractatus de Purgatorio S. Patricii* des H. von Saltrey (ca. 1185/90).<sup>34</sup> Er berichtet von der Katabasis in corpore (!), die der Ritter Owe(i)n zur Zeit König Stephans (1135-54) in der unterirdischen Grotte beim irischen Patricius-Heiligtum vollbrachte. Owens Weg führt durch das Fegfeuer zum irdischen Paradies, das nur über eine bewegliche Brücke zugänglich ist. Daß diese Brücke je nach dem Charakter des Darüberschreitenden breiter oder schmaler werden kann, scheint das typisch irische Element an ihr zu sein; es findet sich u.a. auch bei der Brücke der deutlich irisch geprägten *Visio Alberici* aus Italien (um 1117).<sup>35</sup>

Von dieser Legende vom Ritter Owen existieren mindestens vier Versbearbeitungen: 1.) Ein Gedicht in siebenhebigen Langversen aus dem späten 13. Jahrhundert, ein Teil des *South English Legendary*; es bietet folgende Beschreibung: Die Teufel habe Owen von den verschiedenen Peinen des Purgatoriums "kosten" lassen, aus denen er sich aber immer wieder durch die Anrufung Christi befreien konnte. Nun ziehen sie ihn weiter,

“So þat hi come to a swuþe gret water · deop & brod inou  
 A strong mist þat stonk swuþe uoule · out of þis water drou  
 Of brimston & of oper wo · so strang stench neuere [he] ne sey  
 Ðat mid alle pine of þe world · he miȝte stonde þer ney.  
 A brugge þer was ouer þe water · smallore nemȝte non be[o]  
 Þe smoke was so þikke aboute · þat vnneþe he miȝte ise[o]  
 Lo sede þis sory deuelen · we seggeþ þe iwis  
 Þat vnder þis water deop inou · þe put of helle is  
 And þat þou sselst sone iwite · for þou sselst forþ anon  
 And ouer þis swote water · up þis brugge gon  
 Hy nome þis sely kniȝt anon · and upe þis brugge him drowe  
 And made him go þer vnþonkes · wiþ wrechede inowe  
 For þre[o] þinges vuel ynou · on þis brugge were  
 Þe on was þat he was so hey · þat vnneþe me miȝte for fere  
 Þer uppe go & so deop adoun · habbe so grislich siȝte  
 Þe oper was þat he was so narȝ · þat vnneþe me miȝte  
 Þar uppe sette eny vot · þat he ne uel adoun anon

Þe þridde þat he was so smeþe · þat me ne ssolde þeron gon  
 Bote me slide & folle adoun · & so wis neuere he nere  
 Þis þre[o] þinges þis seli kniȝt · broȝte in grete fere  
 For he was narȝ & slider & hey · he ne ssolde him so bitelle  
 Þat he glide out in eny half · þat he ne vel to helle  
 Þer up he was mid strengþe ibroȝt · & ymad þer uppe gon  
 So gret dred as hym þoȝte · nadde neuer man non  
 Ac sone he þoȝte on Iesu Crist · þat so ofte him sauede er  
 And cride on is holy name · þat he holpe him þer  
 And gan him go þe baldelok · & þe innore more he com  
 Þe hardiore him þoȝte he was · and betere herte nom  
 And þe braddore was is wey · & so longe forþ he ȝeode  
 Þat he was so brod þat þer miȝte · go up a cart for neode  
 And so longe þat tweie cartes miȝte · mete hom wel inou.'''<sup>36</sup>

Vielleicht noch lebhafter ist 2.) die Gestaltung in einem aus sechszeiligen Strophen bestehenden Gedicht derselben Zeit:

- “ 117. And Owain seiȝe þer ouer ligge  
 a swiþe strong naru brigge.  
 Þe fendes seyð þo:  
 ‘Lo sir kniȝt! sestow þis?  
 þis is þe brigge of paradis;  
 here ouer þou most go!  
 118. And we þe schul wiþ stones þrowe,  
 and þe winde þe schal ouer blowe  
 and wirche þe ful wo.  
 Pou no schalt for al þis miduerd,  
 bot ȝif þou falle amidwerd,  
 to our felawes mo.  
 119. And when þou art adoun yfalle,  
 hal com our felawes alle,  
 and wiþ her hokes þe hede.  
 We schul þe teche a newe play’  
 — Pou hast serued ous mani a day —  
 and into helle þe lede.’  
 120. Owain biheld þe brigge smert,  
 þe water þer under blac and swert,  
 and sore him gan to drede,  
 for of o þing he tok ȝeme:  
 neuer mot in sonne beme  
 þicker þan þe fendes ȝede.  
 121. Þe brigge was a heiȝe as a tour,  
 and as scharpe as a rasour,  
 and naru it was also,  
 and þe water þat þer ran under,  
 brend o liȝting and of þonder:  
 þat þouȝt him michel wo.  
 122. Þer nis no clerk, may write wiþ ynke,  
 no no man no may biþinke,

no no maister deuine,  
 þat is ymade, for soþe ywis,  
 under þe brigge of paradis,  
 haluendel þe pine.

123. So þe dominical ous telle:  
 þer is þe pure entre of helle;  
 sein Poule berþ witnesse.  
 Who so falleþ of þe brigge adoun,  
 of him nis no redempcioun,  
 noiþer more no lesse.”<sup>37</sup>

Die Anrufung des hl. Paulus als Zeuge bezieht sich klarerweise auf die oben behandelte Apokryphe. Die lebhaften Teufel vor der riesigen Brücke könnte man sich gut als Figuren eines der zeitgenössischen *religious plays* vorstellen.

Weiters existieren noch zwei Gedichte in Reimpaaren aus dem 15. Jahrhundert, die aber eher als Varianten ein und desselben Werks anzusprechen sind. Hier heißt es:

“Oour þe watur a brygge þer was,  
 ffor soþe kener þen ony glasse;  
 hyt was narowe and hit was hy3e,  
 oneþe þat oþur ende he sy3e;  
 The myddyll was hy3e. Þe ende was lowe,  
 hyt ferde, as hyt hadde ben a bent bowe.

Hys on foote he sette fyrste þer on,  
 and called to Jhesu ry3th anoon.  
 He felte hys foote stonde stedfastly,  
 and þat oþur foote he sette þer by.  
 He called to helpe yn þat place  
 Jhesu, þat euur shall be and euur was;  
 the brygge wax a lytyll bradder,  
 then waxe syr Owayne gladder.”<sup>38</sup>

Die andere Version gebraucht einen anderen Vergleich:

Ouer the water a bryge was,  
 Yt wos glyddyr as ony glase,  
 Ther-of he was full sore a-ferd,  
 Yt was as scharp as ony sward<sup>39</sup>

Das Motiv der Schwertbrücke begegnet schon in dem lateinischen Bericht des Ritters Georg v. Ungarn, der 1353 das Purgatorium besucht hatte,<sup>40</sup> häufiger aber tritt es in den Abenteuerromanen seit dem 12. Jahrhundert auf.<sup>41</sup> Auch ein Beispiel für die Glasbrücke gibt es dort.<sup>42</sup>

Da die Erlebnisse des Owen aber auch mit der älteren Legende von den Taten des hl. Patricius vergesellschaftet wurden, fanden sie auch in der *Legenda Aurea* des Jacobus v. Voragine Aufnahme, von der wiederum eine me. Bearbeitung von 1438 erhalten ist, welche auf der französischen Version der Legendensammlung basiert. Der dort Nicholas genannte Ritter “was led to a place uppon a brygge that was right streyre, and polysshed as glasse, and as slepir as yse y-frore ...”.<sup>43</sup> Aus dem 15. Jahrhundert sind noch zwei, jedoch unvollständige Texte der Abenteuer Owens in der anderen Welt bekannt, das Harley Fragment, eine Adaption aus dem oben zitierten *South English Legendary* und das Hearne Fragment.<sup>44</sup>

Die nicht nur literarisch anspruchsvollste, sondern vielleicht auch inhaltlich faszinierendste Jenseitsvision — auch das Grauen hat sein Fascinosum —<sup>45</sup> ist die *Visio Tnugdali*. Sie wurde 1148 von dem irischen Ritter Tundal in Cork erlebt und bald aus seiner Muttersprache ins Lateinische übersetzt. Von allen mittelalterlichen Jenseitsbeschreibungen war ihr die weiteste Verbreitung beschieden, sowohl in Latein als auch in noch ungezählten volkssprachlichen Versionen, sowohl in Handschriften als auch in Frühdrucken.<sup>46</sup> Unerwarteterweise ist im Mittelenglischen nur eine Bearbeitung, und zwar in Reimpaaren, bekannt, die um 1400 in Nordengland von einem Geistlichen verfaßt worden zu sein scheint. Die oft scharfe Kritik des Laienvisionärs an geistlichen Übeltätern erscheint hier etwas gemildert, im allgemeinen bleibt der unbekannte Verfasser aber nahe am lateinischen Original. In den hier beschriebenen Strafregionen gibt es gleich zwei Brücken für verschiedene Sünden: in einem tiefen Tal

“Over þat pitte he se a brigge  
 Fro þat one syde to þat other lygge;  
 Þat was a thousand steppes of *lengþe* to rede  
 410 And *hit* was scarsely a fote of brede.  
 Alle quakand þat brygge was.  
 Pere myght no man over hit pas,  
 Lered ne lewed, mayden ne wifē,  
 But holy *men* of parfite lyfe.  
 Mony soules he *se* doune falle  
 Of þat brygge, þat was so smalle.  
 He se *non* þat brygge myght pas,  
 But a *preste*, þat a *palmare* was.”<sup>47</sup>

Hier kommt jeder Hochmütige zu Fall; der Ritter allerdings, der sonst viele Strafen selbst mitmachen muß, bleibt von dieser verschont, da er sich im Leben weder "proude" noch "bostous" (432) gezeigt hatte. Viel furchtbarer jedoch ist der andere Übergang: Diebe nämlich erwartet ein schrecklicher See mit schauerlichen Bewohnern:

- "Over þat lake þai so lyge  
 560 A wonder longe, narowe brygge,  
 Two myle of lenght *hit was* semande,  
 And scarsely þe brede of ane hande,  
 With scharpe pykes of irne and stele  
 Hit was thyke *sette* and grevous to fele.  
 Þere myght none pas þat bryge thore,  
 But ȝif his fete were hurt sore.  
 Tho hedewes bestes in þat lake  
 Drowe nere þe brygge here pray to take  
 Of soules, þat felle of þe brige downe,  
 570 To swolowe hem þai were *ay* bowne.  
 Þes hedewes bestes were wonder grete,  
 Þe sowles, þat felle, were here mete.  
 Tundale se þere tho bestes alle  
 And fyre out of here mouthe falle.  
*The fyr þat he se* fro hem falland,  
 Made þe water *all* hote wellande.  
 He *se* one stonde on þe brigge  
 With a *burden of corne* on his rygge,  
 Gretand *with* a dolfulle crye,  
 580 And playned his synne ful petously.  
 Tho pikes prikked his fete sore:  
 He dred tho bestes mekel more,  
 Þat hym to swolowe wer *ay* bowne,  
 ȝif he had fallen of þe brygge downe.  
 Tundale asked þe angelle bryght:  
 'What bemenes þis hedewes sight?'  
*The angell answered þis aȝeyne:*  
 'For þe and other is þis payne,  
 Þat robben men of her ryches  
 590 Or ony goode, þat herres is, [...]  
  
 And he, þat þou seest on þe brygge stonde  
 With *þe scheves* so sore gretand:  
 Fro holy kyrke he *hem stale*.  
 610 *They were tithed and tolde by tale.*  
 Þefore byes he *hem* fullre dere,  
 Þat dede throw payne, þat he has here.  
 Over þis brigge shalle þou wende nowe  
 And with þe lede a wylde cowe.

- Loke þou lede hyr over warly  
 And be war, ho falle not be.  
 For when þou art passed þis payne,  
 Þou schal delyver me hir agayne.  
 Þe behoves to lede þe cow over alle,  
 620 For þou thy *gossybbes* cow stalle'. [...]

- As Tundale stode ille lykande,  
 A wylde cow was brought to his hande.  
 Mawgray his tethe behoves hym nede  
 Take þe cow and forth hyr lede.  
 Hym tought, hit was ful gret a payne,  
 But he myght not be þere agayne.  
 He dide þe angellis comaundement:  
 640 Be þe horne þe cow he hent,  
 He chereset þe cow, alle þat he myght,  
 And to þe brygge he lade hyr ryght.  
 When he on þe brigge was,  
 Þe cow wold no forther pas.  
 He se þe bestes in þe lake  
 Draw nere þe brigge here pray to take.  
 Þe cow hade nere fallen over þat tyde  
 And Tundale on þat other syde.  
 Tundale was ful of ferde þan,

- 650 With gret myscheffe up agayne he wan.  
 Thay passed forth, þat tought hym harde,  
 Tille þai come to þe mydwarde.  
 Ther mete þai him, þat bare þe corne:  
 Þai wend both, þai hade ben lorne.  
 So narow þan þe brygge was,  
 Þat nother myght for other pas.  
 To hem bothe hit was gret payne,  
 For nother myght þai turne agayne,  
 Nother durst, for alle mydlerde,  
 660 Behynde hem loke, so wer þai ferde.  
 Þe scharpe pikes, þat þai on zede,  
 Made her fete bothe to blede,  
 So þat þe blode ranne downe þat tyde  
 Into þe water on eyther syde.''<sup>48</sup>

Diese geradezu originell zu nennende Situation — es gibt keine Parallelen — wird sozusagen durch den *angelus ex machina* gelöst. Er bringt Tundal von der Brücke herunter, erlaubt ihm, die Kuh stehen zu lassen, und heilt seine völlig zerstochnen Füße.

Dieser Überblick über die alt- und mittelenglischen Brückenschilderungen, der freilich nur ein Bruchteil dessen sein kann, was

im Mittelalter an einschlägigen Texten existierte, zeigt, daß auch dem lateinunkundigen Publikum die Vorstellung von einer prüfenden Brücke nach dem Tode weithin bekannt gewesen sein muß. Zu diesen im Auftrag und Interesse der Kirche verbreiteten Formen kamen zweifelsohne noch nur mündlich übermittelte Erzählungen, in denen das Motiv aus keltischer, germanischer oder christlicher Tradition enthalten war.

Es sei nicht übergangen, daß auch jenes der Brücke zur anderen Welt nächstverwandte Motiv, nämlich das von der Messersäule,<sup>49</sup> im Mitttelenglischen mehrfach belegt ist. Es tritt uns hier als ein Teil der "Neun-Punkte-Traktate" entgegen, die darin bestehen, daß jeweils einer Gott wohlgefälligen Handlung eine ihm noch liebere entgegengesetzt wird.<sup>50</sup> So heißt es z.B. in einem fälschlich Richard Rolle zugeschriebenen Text:

loue me anly our al þinge; [...]  
 And þat is me leuere þan þou zode  
 Opon a tre þat tille heuen stode  
 þat ware dryuyne ful of scharpe rasours<sup>51</sup>

In diesem Marterinstrument, das ja *expressis verbis* einen Übergang zum Himmel darstellt, kann man die ins Lotrechte gekippte Version der nagelbesetzten Jenseitsbrücke sehen, womit sich die Genese dieses Motives freilich nicht erschöpft.

Nicht bei allen hierher gehörigen Texten ist der ursprüngliche Gedanke des schwierigen Wegs in die andere Welt noch zu erkennen; so ist etwa die folgende Passage eines anderen Traktates nur dann zu verstehen, wenn man Gesamtheit und Herkunft dieses zunächst ganz willkürlich erscheinenden Motives kennt:

"Loue me [ouer all þin]gis soueraynly, and þi hert to me gif all haly; and þat paies me mare likand to my wille, and þou Mountid vp clymmand on a hille, ffull of sharpe rasours kerwand þe sare, þat þi flesshe fra þe banys hynged awayhere. Amen."<sup>52</sup>

Die besondere Geläufigkeit der Konzeption von der Totenbrücke erweist sich schließlich auch daran, daß von den beiden bisher bekannten Wandfresken des Mittelalters, die dieses Thema zeigen, sich eine in England, und zwar in dem kleinen Ort Chaldon (Surrey) befindet.<sup>53</sup> Das um 1200 entstandene Gemälde führt dem Kirchgänger die letzten Dinge vor Augen, darunter auch die nagelbesetzte Brücke, die wir schon in den anglo-irischen Visionen be-

schrieben fanden. In Chaldon allerdings ist sie zu einem reinen Strafinstrument entartet, das nicht mehr zwei Bereiche des Jenseits, wie etwa Purgatorium und Paradies verbindet, sondern in den Rachen zweier riesiger Dämonen mündet, die die Brücke halten. Die darüber schreitenden Sünder sind durch Werkzeuge als Vertreter verschiedener Berufe gekennzeichnet (ein Schmied mit dem Hammer und Hufeisen, ein Töpfer mit dem Topf usw.); schon gleitet der Fuß des einen oder anderen aus, um in das darunter lodernde Feuer zu stürzen. In Funktion und Aussehen ist die Brücke hier am nächsten den im Tundal und im Thurkill beschriebenen verwandt; die Betonung des Strafcharakters scheint eine anglo-irische Besonderheit zu sein.

Möglich, aber nicht sicher entscheidbar ist, ob sich eine weitere Abbildung der Jenseitsbrücke auf einem Grubenschmelz-Email des über die Hölle triumphierenden Christus befindet. Das "the Masters Plaque" genannte Stück, das um die Mitte des 12. Jahrhunderts vielleicht als Stiftung Bischof Henrys v. Blois in Winchester gefertigt wurde, zeigt nämlich einen auf zwei breiten Stützen ruhenden, gezackten Steg, über dem lebhaftes Flammen züngeln.<sup>54</sup> Parallelen dazu scheinen nicht bekannt zu sein.

Nach diesen Darlegungen stellt sich die weitere Frage, in welchen rechts- und sozialgeschichtlichen Zusammenhang der Hinweis auf den Brückenbau in der Wulfstan zugeschriebenen Homilie und der Vision Stauntons zu stellen ist. Nun treffen wir in der Zeit zwischen dem 11. und 16. Jahrhundert auf eine Reihe von englischen Quellen, die Tätigkeiten um Bau und Instandhaltung von Brücken als kirchlich beeinflusste und von Frömmigkeitsvorstellungen bestimmte Handlungen darstellen. Sie lassen die Aufforderung des Homileten als Teil einer größeren Zahl ähnlicher Handlungsweisen erkennen.

Diese Quellen lassen sich thematisch in vier Gruppen zusammenfassen:

1. Quellen über den Brückenbau als Buße;
2. Quellen über den Brückenbau als wohltätiges Werk;
3. Quellen über Erblässungen an Brücken zur Erhaltung bestehender Brücken und zur Förderung des Brückenbaus;
4. Quellen über Schenkungen für den Brückenbau.

Um den Inhalt dieser Quellen terminologisch genau fassen und von verwandten Erscheinungen trennen zu können, soll im folgenden von Brückenbau im Sinne dieser Quellen als Brückenwerk gesprochen werden.<sup>55</sup>

### 1. Brückenwerk als Buße

Das Brückenwerk als Buße erscheint in der von B. Thorpe unter der irreführenden Bezeichnung *Canons enacted under King Edgar* edierten Textgruppe, die höchst heterogenen Ursprungs ist.<sup>56</sup> Der Teil, der den Beleg über das Brückenwerk enthält, ist ein Poenential:

“Dæ[d]bota sind gedihte on mistlice wisan, *and* micel man mæg mid ælmesan alysan. Se ðe þara mihta hæbbe, arære cirican Gode to lofe; *and* gif hinne þarto onhagige, sille þar land to, *and* læte þær teon geonge men to. þæt þar for hine magon þeowian *and* þær dæghwamlice Gode magon þenian; *and* godige eac Godes cirican gehwar be ðam þe hine onhagige; *and* godige folces fær mid bricgum ofer deope wæteru *and* ofer fule wegas, *and* dæle Godes þances georne þæt he hæbbe swa forð swa hine firmest onhagige; *and* helpe earmra manna georne, wuduwan *and* steopcildan *and* ælþeodigra manna. Freoge his agene þeowan, *and* alese æt oðrum mannum heora þeowan to freote, *and* huru earme gehergode men; *and* fede þearfan, *and* scrīde, husige *and* frige, baðige *and* beddige. *And* him silfum to þearfe, æghwar georne gebedrædene begite on mæssangum *and* on sealmsangum, *and* hine silfne on his Drihtenes est þreage swiðe þearle mid forhæfdnesse ætes *and* wætes *and* gehwilces lichamlices lustes.”<sup>57</sup>

Die sprachliche Gestalt des Textes sowie dessen handschriftliche Überlieferung scheinen den Hinweis zu enthalten, daß dieser nicht vor dem 11. Jahrhundert entstanden sein kann.<sup>58</sup> Damit ist eine gewisse zeitliche Nähe zu unserem Homileten gegeben. Darüber hinaus scheint die Inhaltsgeschichte der Poenentialien die Vermutung zu gestatten, daß die in dem Text beschriebene Kommutation von Bußleistungen gegen Brückenbau und andere Geld-oder Sachleistungen kaum vor dem 11. Jahrhundert festgesetzt worden ist. Denn weder enthalten die einflußreichen englischen Poenentialtexte des 10. Jahrhunderts eine vergleichbare Bestimmung,<sup>59</sup> noch ist in älteren Poenentialien eine generelle Bereitschaft zur Erlaubnis derartiger Kommutationen, zumal mit Beschränkung auf einen bestimmten Personenkreis, feststellbar.<sup>60</sup>

In dem Thorpe'schen Text erscheint das Brückenwerk im Zusammenhang mit der Förderung von Kirchenbau und Stiftungen

für kirchliche Einrichtungen, außerdem mit der Forderung nach Almosengaben an Bedürftige, nach Freilassung von Knechten und nach Abstinenz von leiblichen Genüssen. Ähnlich, wenn auch weniger ausführlich, ist das Brückenwerk in der einer Handschrift des 12. Jahrhunderts entstammenden Homilie *Dominica prima in Quadragesima* beschrieben:

“Pe preost him wile haten þet he nime þa ikke ehte oðer his wurð *and* dele hit wrecche monne oðer to brugge oðer to chirche weorke oðer on sume stude þer hit beoð wel bitoge for *cristes* luue.”<sup>61</sup>

## 2. Brückenbau als wohltätiges Werk

In dieser Gruppe von Quellen wird das Brückenwerk lediglich in einen losen Zusammenhang mit dem Erbringen guter Taten gerückt, sei es direkt durch bestimmte Gruppen, sei es indirekt durch Aufforderungen zur Fürbitte für solche. Die bedeutendste dieser Gruppen waren die vermutlich am Ende des 12. Jahrhunderts um den hl. Bénezet von Avignon auftretenden Brückenbrüder. In England findet sich ein Beleg für die gleiche Tätigkeit in den aus dem Jahr 1547 überlieferten Statuten der Gilde des Hl. Kreuzes zu Birmingham:

“Allso theare be mainteigned, w<sup>t</sup> parte of the premisses, and kept in good Reparaciouns, two greate stone bridges, and diuers ffole and daungerous high wayes; the charge whereof the towne of hitsellfe ys not hable to mainteign; So that that the Lacke thereof wilbe a greate noysaunce to the kinges mat<sup>ies</sup> Subiectes passing to and ffrom the marches of walcs, and an vtter Ruynie to the same towne,—being one of the fayrest and moste profittable towne[s] to the kinges highnesse in all the Shyre.”<sup>62</sup>

Nach einem aus York stammenden Gebetstext von 1405 soll gebetet werden für:

“al pilgrymes and palmers and for al *that* any gode gates has gane or sal ga. and for *thaim that* brigges *and* stretes makes *and* amendes *that* god grant us parte of *thare* gode dedes and *thaim* of oures.”<sup>63</sup>

Die Belege haben mitunter den Charakter von eher beiläufigen Bemerkungen beispielgebender Art<sup>64</sup> oder sind in Meßbüchern enthalten, bei denen der Eintrag eines bestimmten Ritus auch einem Bestreben nach Vollständigkeit in der Verzeichnung der möglichen liturgischen Praxis folgen kann und nicht so sehr dem Bedürfnis nach penibler Nachzeichnung des tatsächlichen Hergangs einer bestimmten Praxis entsprungen zu sein braucht.<sup>65</sup>

### 3. Erblassungen an Brücken oder zum Zwecke des Brückenbaus

Für diese Beleggruppe liegen erste Hinweise aus dem frühen 14. Jahrhundert vor.<sup>66</sup> Aus dem Mandatum des Bischofs Richard von Durham (1314) geht hervor, daß nicht nur häufig Erblasser Brücken testamentarisch begünstigten, sondern auch, daß nicht selten Erben, die sich geprellt fühlten, derartige testamentarische Bestimmungen zu umgehen trachteten:

“Insinuantibus nobis multis accepimus fidedignis quod nonnulli fideles, in extremis agentes, ob animarum suarum salutem, varias pecuniarum summas et res alias, ad fabricam, reparationem, seu refectionem pontium et calceti inter Norton et Byllingham, in suis ultimis voluntatibus legaverunt, in utilitatem itinerantium per loca prædicta fideliter convertendas; quidam tamen, suæ salutis immemores et pias decedentium ultimas voluntates temere impediētes, hujusmodi res et pecuniarum summas occultant, et occulte detinere præsumunt, in animarum suarum periculum, et itinerantium per ipsa loca non modicum dispendium et gravamen; propter quod non est dubium eos majoris excommunicationis sententiam, in eos latam, qui pias decedentium voluntates impediunt, incurrisse.”<sup>67</sup>

Beispiele für solche Testamente sind aus dem 14. und 15. Jahrhundert nachweisbar, ebenso ist noch aus der Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts ein Inquisitionsbeleg gegen Erbschaftshinterzieher erhalten, die Erbschaftsanteile zugunsten von Wegeausbesserungen zurückgehalten hatten.<sup>68</sup>

### 4. Schenkungen für Brückenbau

Aus dem 16. Jahrhundert liegt hierfür ein Beleg vor in der Übertragung des Klosters Christ Church an die Kathedrale von Canterbury durch Heinrich VIII. In der Urkunde wird die Schenkung mit der Übernahme der Lasten für Brücken- und Straßenbau durch die Kathedrale begründet.<sup>69</sup> Ob allerdings dieser Beleg als Hinweis auf eine allgemeine Praxis gewertet werden kann, erscheint zweifelhaft angesichts des Empfängers und der allgemeinen politischen Umstände der Schenkung.

In der Mehrzahl der genannten Quellen<sup>70</sup> findet sich der Gedanke, daß das Brückenwerk als Hilfe für die Armen oder sonst Bedürftigen anzusehen sei. Der Almosengedanke, ganz gleich, ob ausdrücklich an Bußleistungen gekoppelt oder nicht, scheint also in engem Bezug zum Brückenwerk zu stehen, unabhängig von der

Quellenart und der Zeit, in der jeweils die Zeugnisse für das Brückenwerk überliefert sind.

Außerdem<sup>71</sup> steht das Brückenwerk im Zusammenhang mit Arbeiten zur Ausbesserung von Wegen oder zur Überwindung von Sümpfen erwähnt. Das Brückenwerk erscheint also in diesen Quellen als nicht auf Brücken im technischen Sinne beschränkte Tätigkeit, sondern umfaßt auch Arbeiten, die die Begehrbarkeit von Wegen über gefährliche Stellen sicherstellen sollen. In Parallele hierzu steht das weitere semantische Feld der Wörter für Brücke in skandinavischen Sprachen.<sup>72</sup> Auch in nahegelegenen Teilen der Indogermania sind für die jeweiligen Wörter für 'Brücke' Bedeutungen wie 'Damm', 'Steg', 'Knüppeldamm', 'Brett' u.dgl. belegt.<sup>73</sup> Zwar kommen auch im Ae. für *brycg* Belege mit einem weiteren semantischen Feld als 'Brücke' vor, so mit 'Furt', in *The Battle of Maldon*.<sup>74</sup> Jedoch erscheint es fraglich, ob diesen Belegen viel Gewicht beigelegt werden darf, da sie aus einem alliterierenden Text entnommen sind und sich die Bedeutung 'Furt' lediglich mit sachkritischen, nicht aber mit kontextanalytischen Überlegungen begründen läßt.<sup>75</sup> Auch lassen sich aus der ae. Toponymie recht viele Belege beibringen, daß morphologisch zwischen Ortsnamen mit dem Bestandteil 'Brücke' und Ortsnamen mit dem Bestandteil 'Furt' unterschieden wurde.<sup>76</sup>

Es ist also unsicher, ob aus einer — zumal im Ae. schwer feststellbaren — semantischen Indifferenz zwischen 'Brücke' und 'Damm'<sup>77</sup> die Parallelität von Vorschriften über Handlungen im Brücken- und Wegebau begründet werden darf. Vielmehr erscheint es denkbar, daß die Parallelität von Handlungen in diesen Bereichen aus der Ähnlichkeit der Objekte resultiert, denen die Handlungen galten, ohne daß dabei vorausgesetzt werden müßte, daß die Objekte mit semantisch wenig differenzierten Bezeichnungen belegt gewesen wären.

Auch für die zuerst beschriebene Gemeinsamkeit in den Aussagen der genannten Quellen scheint die Herleitung aus gemeinsamer Wurzel zweifelhaft. Die Verknüpfung allein einer gesellschaftsbezogenen Tätigkeit wie des Brückenwerks mit dem Almosengedanken ist kein ausreichendes Indiz, mit dem das Brückenwerk als ein verbindendes Element jener äußerst heterogenen Quellengruppen bestimmt werden könnte, die das Brückenwerk bele-

gen. Vielmehr erscheint es denkbar, daß sowohl in die Testamente als auch in die Poenentialien wie Meßbücher und die Wulfstan zugeschriebene Homilie das Brückenwerk jeweils unabhängig von seiner Nennung in einer anderen Quellengruppe Eingang fand. Die aufzeigbaren Gemeinsamkeiten sind im übrigen an eine nicht ungefährliche Tätigkeit gebunden, die geeignet erscheint, wiederholt in ganz unterschiedlichen Bereichen besondere Aufmerksamkeit erregt zu haben. Es kommt hinzu, daß den herangezogenen Quellen für das Brückenwerk solche Gemeinsamkeiten fehlen, die erwartet werden dürften, wenn sie aus einem geschlossenen Traditionskreis entstanden wären. So sind als Begründungen, die in den Quellen für das Brückenwerk als Almosen angeführt werden, mehrere Motive genannt, einmal der Dank an Gott, einmal die Liebe zu Christus. In keiner anderen vor das 15. Jahrhundert zu datierenden englischen Quelle als der Wulfstan zugeschriebenen Homilie wird das Motiv der Sorge für das Wohlergehen der eigenen Seele oder der Seele eines Vertrauten oder Verwandten angeführt.<sup>78</sup> Eine Ableitung des gesamten Brückenwerks als solchem aus dem visionären Vorstellungskomplex der 'Jenseitsbrücke' erscheint daher nicht möglich, wohl aber ist es denkbar, daß einzelne Aspekte des Brückenwerks von dem Bereich der Visionen beeinflusst worden sind. Zusammengenommen jedoch bezeugen die Quellen für das Brückenwerk nicht mehr und nicht weniger als den hohen gesellschaftlichen Rang, der Brücken und vergleichbaren Bauwerken sowie dem Umgang mit denselben in England im Mittelalter beigelegt wurde.

Für einen solchen Rang zeugt nun auch das bereits aus vornormannischer Zeit belegte Brückenbauregal (ae. *brycgbōt*), und es stellt sich die Frage, ob das Brückenwerk an die ae. *brycgbōt* anschließt. Die *brycgbōt* als Teil der *trimoda necessitas* (*fyrð*, *burhbōt*, *brycgbōt*) gehört freilich zu den in der Forschung umstrittenen Rechtstiteln.

Die ältere, verfassungsgeschichtliche Forschung stellte sie in historischen Bezug zur Belastung der Kirchengüter mit der Araberabwehr durch Karl Martell, nahm als Zeitpunkt für die Durchsetzung der *trimoda necessitas*<sup>79</sup> die Synode von Clofeshō i.J. 747 an und sah deren allgemeine Verbreitung gegen den Widerstand des Bonifatius und anderer als gegeben an.<sup>80</sup> Dafür spricht, daß die *trimoda*

*necessitas* in echten Urkunden des 8. und 10. Jahrhunderts von der Klosterimmunität ausgenommen ist. Die ältere Forschung vertrat außerdem die Ansicht, daß die *trimoda necessitas* insgesamt römisch-rechtlichen Ursprungs sei, und begründete diese Auffassung mit dem Hinweis auf die *munera sordida*.<sup>81</sup> Gegen diese Deutung erhob schon Stevenson Bedenken.<sup>82</sup> Er konnte belegen, daß der auf die *trimoda necessitas* in den Akten des Konzils von Clofeshō 747 hindeutende Passus ein später Einschub ist, akzeptierte jedoch die Durchsetzung der *trimoda necessitas* vor 770. Außerdem wies Stevenson darauf hin, daß die These von der Abhängigkeit der *trimoda necessitas* vom römischen Recht zumindest für die *fyrð* nicht haltbar sei wegen der persönlichen Verpflichtung, auf der die *fyrð* beruht.<sup>83</sup> Daran, daß in der Zeit Aethelbalds von Merzien zumindest *burhþōt* und *brycgþōt* als Regal durchgesetzt wurden, zweifelt auch die neuere Forschung nicht, will von diesen beiden Regalen jedoch die *fyrð* abtrennen und diesen erst später ansetzen.<sup>84</sup> Für das 11. Jahrhundert und die Folgezeit hat bereits Maitland darauf hingewiesen, daß zumindest in einigen *Counties* die *brycgþōt* zum *munus* der County-Bewohner geworden war.<sup>85</sup>

Wenn nun als herrschende Lehre angesehen werden kann, daß die *brycgþōt* im 8. Jahrhundert von merzischen Herrschern gegen den Willen der Kirche durchgesetzt wurde, so ist damit die *brycgþōt* als eine Zwangsmaßnahme gekennzeichnet, bei der nicht damit zu rechnen ist, daß von diesem Rechtstitel ein Weg direkt zum späteren Brückenwerk führt. Auch blieb die *brycgþōt* nicht allein bedeutsam als Kirchenlast, sondern betraf zunehmend auch Organe weltlicher Rechtsbereiche. Dies setzt die Ausbildung von Institutionen voraus, bei denen die Dienstpflichten gegenüber dem Herrscher nicht mehr oder nicht mehr allein auf der persönlichen Gefolgschaftspflicht beruhten.<sup>86</sup> Ein solcher Prozeß ist nun — wenngleich insgesamt erst retrospektiv und eher indirekt bezeugt — in der Herausbildung der *Midland Counties* im Verlauf des 10. Jahrhunderts zu erkennen, die uns als Verfassungsorgane allerdings erst im *Domesday Book* deutlich erkennbar entgegenreten.<sup>87</sup> Freilich scheint die Verpflichtung der *Counties*, für die Erhaltung von Brücken in dem ihnen vorgesetzten *township* zu sorgen, regional eng begrenzt gewesen zu sein.<sup>88</sup> Belege für eine solche Verpflichtung erscheinen nur aus den östlichen Midlands<sup>89</sup> sowie um London.<sup>90</sup> Aus dem Mal-

dongedicht scheint hervorzugehen, daß noch um 1000 der in Essex ansässige Wulfstan ebenso tapfer wie erfolglos die Furt verteidigte,<sup>91</sup> die an seinen eigenen Landbesitz angrenzte und diesen erschloß.<sup>92</sup> Auch in der in das 11. Jahrhundert datierten Brückenbauordnung für Rochester<sup>93</sup> sind die Lasten für die Instandhaltung der Themsebrücke bei Rochester auf nur einige umliegende Orte und Gehöfte sowie den Bischof von Rochester selbst verteilt. Für Chester läßt sich aus einem Gerichtsverfahren des späteren 13. Jahrhunderts ermitteln, daß nach dem Einsturz der Dee-Brücke im Jahre 1279 *township* und *County* gemeinsam die Lasten trugen, die zur Wiederherstellung des Bauwerks erforderlich waren; lediglich das Kloster St. Werburgh ließ sich durch einen Gerichtsbeschuß von der *brycgbōt* befreien.<sup>94</sup>

Es kann also davon ausgegangen werden, daß der *brycgbōt* vor wie nach der normannischen Eroberung der Charakter eines Zwangsinstruments eignete, das Gegenstand gesetzlicher Regelungen unter Aethelred, Knut und Heinrich I. war<sup>95</sup> und dessen man sich mitunter zu entledigen trachtete. Von letzterem zeugen eine Reihe von Gerichtsverfahren, die in den *Coram-rege-Rolls* Edwards III. und Richards II. belegt sind. In diesen Verfahren müssen sich immer wieder Privatleute, *townships* und auch kirchliche Institutionen und Amtsträger gegen den Vorwurf verteidigen, sie seien ihren Pflichten zur Unterhaltung von Brücken und Dämmen, zumal solchen, die sie selbst angelegt hätten, nicht nachgekommen.<sup>96</sup> Kirchliche Amtsträger und Institutionen wehrten sich gegen solche Beschuldigungen mit dem Argument, daß man zwar die Brücke (nicht selten aus Almosengeldern) habe errichten lassen, daß daraus jedoch keine Verpflichtung zur immerwährenden Erhaltung des Bauwerks resultiere. Dafür seien diejenigen zuständig, durch deren Benutzung die Brücke zu Schaden gekommen sei.

So brachte ein Anwalt des Bischofs von London im Prozeß um die Brücke in Guildford 1382 vor:

“dicit quod a toto tempore quamcumque (*sic*) predictus pons dirruptus seu ruinosus fuit et gentes et vicini patrie ex elemosinis suis et collectis in patria factis intuitu caritatis et pro exsiamientis (*sic*) hominum ibidem transeuncium pontem illum reparaverunt, et aliquando dominus Edwardus nuper rex Anglie avus domini regis nunc et alii progenitores sui et aliqui episcopi Londonienses predecessores sui qui pro tempore fuerunt a diu post tempus memoris (*sic*) ad supplicationem gencium patrie ad reparacionem et sustentacionem ei-

usdem pontis ex mera voluntate sua contulerunt absque hoc quod predecessores nunc episcopi qui pro tempore fuerunt pontem illum reparaverunt seu reparare debe[b]ant seu solebant de iure a tempore cuius contrarii memoria non existit seu quod predictus nunc episcopus pontem illum reparare tenetur sicut superius presentatum est; et hoc paratus est verificare per patriam etc. Et Thomas de Shardelowe qui sequitur pro domino rege dicit quod predecessores ipsius nunc episcopi qui pro tempore fuerunt pontem illum reparaverunt et reparare debent et solent a tempore cuius contrarii memoria non existit et predictus nunc episcopus pontem illum reparare tenetur sicut super ipsum presentatum est;<sup>97</sup>

Aus dem Fall wird deutlich, daß der Brückenbau, der mit Almosen finanziert worden war, als freiwillige Leistung der kirchlichen Träger angesehen wurde und damit nicht der *brycgbōt* unterlag. Zwischen dem Brückenwerk als guter Tat bzw. aus Almosengeldern und der *brycgbōt* als Zwangsinstrument wurde also unterschieden. Die Rechtsfälle zeigen aber, daß diese Unterscheidung im 14. Jahrhundert schon nicht mehr dem subjektiven Rechtsbewußtsein mancher Bevölkerungsgruppen entsprach, die den Standpunkt vertraten, wer Brücken gebaut habe, müsse auch für deren Erhaltung sorgen, zumal dann, wenn Almosengelder für den Bau verwendet worden waren. Daß sich die Kirche gegen diesen Rechtsstandpunkt wehrte, zeigt, wie sehr man bemüht war, die Grenzen des Brückenwerks eng zu ziehen.

Dieselbe Unterscheidung tritt auch in dem umgekehrten Fall auf, daß ein *township*, das von Rechts wegen zur Erhaltung einer Brücke verpflichtet war, dazu jedoch nicht die Möglichkeit hatte, von einer wohltätigen Organisation unterstützt werden konnte.<sup>98</sup> Hier tritt das Brückenwerk in Funktion, wo Rechtsansprüche aus der *brycgbōt* nicht durchsetzbar erscheinen.<sup>99</sup>

Die in der Tudorzeit wachsende Handelstätigkeit enthüllte überdies den schlechten Zustand der Verkehrswege und ließ ein unmittelbares Eingreifen des Königs geraten erscheinen. So legt Heinrich VIII fest, daß diejenigen, die anerkanntermaßen für die Instandhaltung der Brücken zu sorgen hätten, dieser Pflicht auch nachzukommen hätten. In den Fällen, in denen die Belastung mit Arbeiten zur Erhaltung der Brücken strittig sei, sollten die für die Instandsetzung erforderlichen Kosten als Steuer auf einen vor Ort zu bestimmenden Personenkreis umgelegt werden. Als Aufsichtsinstanz bestimmte Heinrich VIII. die *justices of the peace*.<sup>100</sup>

Aus alledem ergibt sich, daß die *brycgbōt* in den verschiedenen Be-

reichen und Zeiten, in denen sie durchgesetzt wurde, Widerstand hervorrief oder nur mit Widerwillen akzeptiert wurde wie eine Last, gegen die man sich wehrte, wenn es möglich war. Von diesem Rechtstitel scheint eine Anknüpfung an das mit Almosengedanken behaftete Brückenwerk nur gleichsam in negativer Hinsicht möglich zu sein: Wenn die *brycgbōt* als besonders zwanghaft empfunden wurde, könnte das Brückenwerk gerade deswegen besonders überzeugend gewirkt haben, weil jemand zur Übernahme einer solchen Last freiwillig bereit war. Freilich bieten sich aus dem englischen Bereich für eine solche Vermutung nur die späten Hinweise auf die Ersatzfunktion der brückenbauenden Gilde in Birmingham an.

Wenn somit das Brückenwerk weder aus der älteren englischen und irischen Bußliteratur noch aus der vornormannischen *brycgbōt* hergeleitet werden kann, so verbleibt noch die Möglichkeit zu untersuchen, ob aus der politischen Lage des beginnenden 11. Jahrhunderts in England Anknüpfungspunkte gewonnen werden können. Solche könnten vorliegen, wenn in den zeitnahen Quellen Hinweise auf Brückenerstörungen oder nachlässigen Umgang mit der *brycgbōt* vorhanden wären. Doch ist zu bemerken, daß in den ae. Annalen als der Hauptquelle für die Spätzeit Aethelreds II., die bekanntlich in deutlich kritischer Distanz zu diesem Herrscher stehen, nicht nur keinerlei Hinweise enthalten sind, die mit dem Aufkommen des Brückenwerks in Verbindung gebracht werden können, sondern daß im Gegenteil mehrfach von der Funktionsfähigkeit von Brücken berichtet wird.<sup>101</sup>

Bei diesem Befund stellt sich die weitere Frage, ob aus anderen Gebieten im 11. Jahrhundert Quellen vorhanden sind, die in Parallele zu den Quellen über das englische Brückenwerk stehen. Bei Wulfstan als kirchlichem Oberhaupt, der Erzdiözese York liegt es nahe, den Blick zuerst auf Skandinavien zu richten.<sup>102</sup> In der Tat treten uns unter den dänischen, schwedischen und gotländischen Runensteinen nicht wenige Exemplare entgegen, die deutliche Hinweise auf das Brückenwerk abgeben können.

Da ist zunächst der oft zitierte und abgebildete, um 1040 datierte Stein von Ramsundsberg (Kirchspiel Jäder, Södermanland) zu nennen. Die Inschrift, auf der Zeichnung eines Drachenrumpfes angebracht, lautet:

“SiripR: kiarpi: bur: posi: muþiR: alriks: tutiR: urms: fur: salu: hulmkirs:  
faþur: sukrupar: buata: sis.”<sup>103</sup>

Aus Uppland ist u.a. die Inschrift von Täby erhalten, deren Veranlasser Jarlubaki in der ersten Hälfte des 11. Jahrhunderts gelebt hat:

“iarliabaki lit raisa stain þisa at sik kuikuan, auk bru þisa karpi fur ont sina auk ain ati alan tabu kup hialbi ont hans.”<sup>104</sup>

Eine weitere Inschrift liegt aus Gotland vor:

“sigmutr · let rasa s[t]ain eftiR brupr · sina · auk · bro · kierua · eftiR · sik-  
biern · santa mikal hie[lbi ant h]ans auk · at [·] botraif · auk at sigraif · auk ·  
at aibiern · faþur þaiRa · altr · auk bikui han · i by · sunarst · kaiRuiþr lekþi  
ormaluR menR · inti uR.”<sup>105</sup>

Weitere Zeugnisse dieser Art sind aus Schweden<sup>106</sup> und aus Dänemark bekannt.<sup>107</sup>

Neben diesen Inschriften, aus denen ein direkter Bezug zwischen Fürsorge um die Seele und Brückenbau erkennbar ist, tritt eine größere Zahl von einfachen Brückenbauinschriften aus Skandinavien im 11. und 12. Jahrhundert.<sup>108</sup>

Sie stammen aus mehreren Gebieten des altostnordischen Sprachbereichs (Södermanland, Uppland, Gotland, Schonen, Seeland) und bezeugen, beginnend in der ersten Hälfte des 11. Jahrhunderts, eine hohe Bedeutung des Brückenbaus als einer Tätigkeit, derer man sich rühmen konnte und die mitunter nützlich erschien zur Fürsorge für die Seele im Jenseits. Es ist daher anzunehmen, daß auch den Dänen das Brückenwerk zur Fürsorge für die eigene Seele oder die Seele eines Verwandten vertraut war, die als Eroberer und Siedler in England erschienen, obwohl von dort kein vergleichbarer epigraphischer Runentext erhalten ist.

Die deutlichste zeitgenössische Parallele zu der Vorstellung vom Brückenwerk, wie sie in der Wulfstan zugeschriebenen Homilie bezeugt ist, kommt demnach aus Skandinavien.<sup>109</sup> Der Homilet konnte also zumindest bei der aus Skandinavien stammenden Bevölkerungsgruppe mit Verständnis rechnen, als er auf die Vorstellung der Jenseitsbrücke anspielte.

Während jedoch in Skandinavien allem Anschein nach das Brückenwerk auf die Fürsorge für die Seele im Jenseits beschränkt blieb und in dieser Beschränkung keinen langen Bestand hatte, er-

öffnete sich durch den Einbezug des Brückenwerks in das kirchliche Almosen- und Ablaßwesen die Möglichkeit zu produktiver Weiterentwicklung.

Daß dieser Zusammenhang zwischen irdischer Guttat einerseits und entsprechender Vergeltung nach dem Tode andererseits gerade im nördlichen Europa bewußt blieb, zeigen Strophen der bekanntesten norwegischen Legendevisse, des *Draumkvæde*, das aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach ins 13. bis 14. Jahrhundert zurückreicht.<sup>110</sup> Die Ballade beschreibt die Jenseitsvision des Adligen Olav Åsteson, der unter anderem auch zu einer gefährvollen Brücke kommt, welche mit Elementen der altnord. *Gjallarbrú* und solchen der anglo-irischen Straf- und Probebrücke, wie wir sie z.B. im *Purgatorium S. Patricii* kennengelernt hatten, gestaltet ist.<sup>111</sup> Es heißt dort (Zitat nach der ältesten Niederschrift von 1842):

“Shæl æ den i denne vaere  
som fattikæ hæv gjevi skoe  
den tar inkje ræddas i ånno være  
fø qvasse hæklebro.  
— Tonga talar å sannong svarar på domedage —”<sup>112</sup>

Auffallend, aber u.W. noch unerklärt sind die Parallelen der norwegischen Volksballade mit dem nordenglischen bzw. schottischen “lyke-wake dirge”, der seit dem frühen 17. Jahrhundert mehrfach als *popular antiquity* gedruckt wurde. Dort finden sich folgende Strophen:

“When thou from hence away are paste,  
to Whinny-muir thou comest at laste.  
If ever thou gavest hosen and shoon,  
sit thee down and put them on.  
If hosen and shoon thou ne’er gavest nane,  
the whinnes shall pricke thee to the bare gane.”

Dann kommt die Seele zur Jenseitsbrücke, der “Brigg o’ Dread”.<sup>113</sup>

Die beide Male erwähnten Schuhe erinnern an den altnord. *helskô*, der Toten ins Grab mitgegeben wurde, um ihnen den “lång ganga”,<sup>114</sup> den weiten Weg zu ihren Verbleibsorten in der anderen Welt, zu erleichtern. Man darf also wohl hinter einer Formulierung wie der eben zitierten den Gedanken sehen: Wer einem Armen auf Erden Schuhe gibt, kann damit rechnen, die Totenbrücke oder an-

dere Wege seiner Prüfung gut zu überschreiten. Daß diese Beziehung zwischen Almosen an Arme und künftigem Seelenheil im Mittelalter sehr konkret gedacht wurde, erhellt ja deutlich auch aus den cluniazensischen Konventionen, für jeden in ihre "libri commemorales" aufgenommenen Verstorbenen gerade einen Armen zu speisen.<sup>115</sup> Wie nötig das erwähnte Schuhwerk nach dem Tode war, zeigt die Vision des holsteinischen Bauern Gottschalk von 1189, die mehrfach vorchristliche Motive bewahrt hat. Dort müssen die Seelen der Abgeschiedenen eine wüste Heidelandschaft voll spitzer, unbiegsamer Dornen, dicht wie in einer Hechel, überqueren. Gottschalk, der zunächst ohne Schuhwerk in diese "penalis mirica" geführt wird, bricht nach wenigen Schritten vor Schmerzen zusammen. Einer der ihn begleitenden Engel erklärt dem Visionär: "quicumque in presenti vita indigenti pro facultate sua instinctu caritatis divine opem ferret, ut vel calciamenta et hec qualiacumque etiam de corrigiis paupertate datorem urgente consuta illi conferret, deus, qui in paupere suo muneratus esset, accepti memor beneficii in tanto periculo talem ei consolationem rependeret."<sup>116</sup> Die Tröstung aber besteht ganz greifbar in einem Paar Schuhe, das von einer Linde vor der Heide von einem Engel gepflückt und an den Verdienstvollen verteilt wird. Die Analogie auch zu irdischer und jenseitiger Brücke (Wulfstan, William Staunton) ist evident. Aber auch diese Vorstellung findet sich in der *Visio Godeschalci* wieder, wobei allerdings die Brücke durch Flöße<sup>117</sup> ersetzt ist: Ein stürmischer Strom voll von Schwertscheiden und Lanzenspitzen — auch dies eine Reminiszenz aus der germanischen Mythologie<sup>118</sup> — hemmt den Weiterweg der Seelen. Viele werden da so zerschnitten, daß sie fast zu Nichts geworden erscheinen. Die Gerechten jedoch werden von Holzbrettern aufgenommen, die sie heil ans andere Ufer des schrecklichen Stromes bringen. Abermals erklärt der Engel Gottschalk: "quicumque horum exemplo vias difficiles in locis palustribus vel alias profundioribus aggeres levando seu per rivos et fluvios pontes.collocando vel dilapsos reparando permeabiles labore sive sumptu suo faceret ... in tempore tribulationis non quesitam, sed ultro sibi occurrentem consolationem invenirent."<sup>119</sup> Auch hier also die explizite Analogsetzung von irdischem und jenseitigem Weg; der hier wohlthätig errichtete Damm über den Sumpf und die Brücke über das Wasser garantieren die Überwindung ähnlicher Hindernisse mit ähnlichen Mitteln im Drüben.

Noch anderes verweist auf das alte Skandinavien: Ein isländisches und grönländisches Spiel<sup>120</sup> besteht darin, daß runde Steine in einer Reihe aufgelegt wurden, über die man mit einem Bein balancieren mußte, ohne von dieser "Brücke" abzurutschen. Daß es sich nämlich um eine solche handelte, zeigt der plastische Name des Spiels: "að gánga (á) heljarbru". Hel ist hier vielleicht noch im ursprünglichen Sinn einfach das Reich der Toten und besitzt noch nicht die negative Bedeutung, die der christlichen Hölle zugrunde liegt; da man aber nicht von dieser Steinbrücke hinabstürzen darf, muß doch etwas wie der Höllenstrom der Visionen darunter gedacht gewesen sein. Das wohl ins Mittelalter zu datierende Spiel dürfte als Relikt eines magischen Brauches zu deuten sein, mit dem ein glückliches Überschreiten der Seelenbrücke im Jenseits bewirkt werden sollte, indem man hier schon eine symbolische schwierige Brücke überwand. Daß Kinderspiele oftmals nur Spätformen vormals ganz ernst gemeinten religiösen Brauchtums sind, ist ja aus der Volkskunde bestens bekannt.<sup>121</sup> Man mag sich die Ausführung des alten skandinavischen Brauchs etwa so vorstellen, wie dies bei sibirischen Schamanen beschrieben ist, die das Überschreiten der Jenseitsbrücke mimisch nachvollzogen.<sup>122</sup> Eliade hat ja viele Elemente des Schamanismus bei den Nordgermanen festgestellt.<sup>123</sup> Es gibt keinen Grund anzunehmen, daß Angeln, Sachsen und Dänen, als sie in England siedelten, gerade die Überlieferungen über die Gjallarbru<sup>124</sup> — so sie damals schon existierte — nicht vom Kontinent mitgebracht haben sollten; sie hätte dann eine Grundlage für die so bereitwillige Aufnahme des Brückenmotivs in seiner christlichen Form gebildet.

Abschließend sei es erlaubt, die uns nach obigen Quellen und Zusammenhängen wahrscheinlich scheinenden Entwicklungslinien der mit den Brücken verbundenen Konzeptionen im mittelalterlichen England nachzuzeichnen: Aus Werken der religiösen Literatur lateinischer Sprache, die aber bald übersetzt wurden, lernte zunächst die anglosächsische Geistlichkeit die Vorstellung kennen, die Seelen der Toten hätten, um ins Paradies zu gelangen, eine schwierige Brücke zu überschreiten. Gleichzeitig war die Herstellung und Erhaltung von Brücken und Wegen aber ein unbeliebtes Erfordernis des öffentlichen Lebens, das u.a. auf dem Weg der Buße und durch fromme Werke geleistet werden mußte. So war es

nicht fernliegend, zum irdischen Brückenwerk unter Hinweis auf die Jenseitsbrücke aufzurufen, wie dies Wulfstan tut. Skandinavische Einwanderer werden auch in England von der bei ihnen in verschiedener Form gut bezeugten Bedeutung der Brücke gesprochen haben, was die lateinische Tradition, vielleicht auch eine schon vorhandene germanische, verstärkte. In me. Zeit erlangte die Vorstellung von der Seelenbrücke weite Verbreitung durch verschiedene volkssprachliche Texte, so daß sie auch in einer authentischen Vision, wie der William Stauntons oder der der Anonyma von 1422 geschaut werden konnte. Wie in der ae. Homilie wird in Stauntons Bericht ausdrücklich die Analogie von irdischer und jenseitiger Brücke dargetan. Gerade, da die konkrete *brycgbōt* auf Widerstand stieß, mußte die Kirche an der Zirkulation solcher Texte, die von gefährlichen Brücken in der anderen Welt berichteten, interessiert sein: Einmal *sub specie saeculi*, weil dann die für die Kommunikation unerläßlichen Wege und Brücken bereitwilliger erstellt wurden, und zum andern *sub specie aeternitatis*, da ihre eigentliche Aufgabe ja in der eschatologischen Errettung der Menschen lag. Ihnen wurde so ein Mittel dazu auf Erden angeboten, das den Weg ins Himmelreich ebnen konnte: *pons aquarum, pons animarum*.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Aufgrund stilistischer Kriterien glaubte K. Jost (*Wulfstanstudien*. Bern 1950, 240. Schweizer Anglisti. Arbeiten. 23.) die Homilie (s.u. Anm. 2) in Gegensatz zu R. Becher (*Wulfstans Homilien*. Diss.phil. Leipzig 1910. Bes. 90-93, 105) als "literarisch und sprachlich unecht" einstufen zu müssen; vgl. J. P. Kinard (*A Study of Wulfstan's Homilies*. Diss.phil. Baltimore 1897, 59), der aufgrund nicht spezifizierter stilistischer Gründe zu demselben Ergebnis kommt. Eine positive Aussage ist mit einer solchen Bewertung weder hinsichtlich der Entstehungszeit noch hinsichtlich der Verfasserschaft erreicht. Jost selbst scheint aber davon auszugehen, daß der Text dem 11. Jh. zuzuweisen ist (s.o., loc.cit.) Die Sekundärliteratur für den Zeitraum bis 1971 ist zusammengestellt bei S. B. Greenfield, F. C. Robinson, *A Bibliography of Publications on Old English Literature to the End of 1972* (Toronto, Buffalo 1980), Nrn 6506-6543. Hinzuzufügen sind u.a. aus neuerer Zeit: M. M. Gatch, *Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England* (Toronto, Buffalo 1977), bes. 18-22, 105-115, 119-128; Ida M. Hollowell, "Linguistic Factors Underlying Style Levels in Four Homilies of Wulfstan", *Neophil.* 61 (1977), 287-296; M. Cummings, "Paired Opposites in Wulfstan's *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*", *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa* 50 (1980), 233-243; Rachel Jurovics, "Sermo Lupi etc. The Moral Purpose of Rhetoric", P. E. Szarmach, B. F. Huppé, Hrsg., *The Old English Homily and its Background* (Albany, N. Y. 1978), 203-220; H. Sauer, "Zur Überlieferung und An-

lage von Erzbischof Wulfstans 'Handbuch' ", DA 36 (1980), 341-384; D. G. Scragg, "Napier's 'Wulfstan' Homily XXX", ASE 6 (1977), 197-211; Pauline A. Stafford, "Church and Society in the Age of Aelfric", P. E. Szarmach, B. F. Huppé, Hrsg., *The Old English Homily and its Background* (Albany N.Y. 1978), 11-42; Dies., "The Laws of Cnut and the History of Anglo-Saxon Royal Promises", ASE 10 (1982), 173-190. Die Arbeiten Dorothy Whitelocks zu Wulfstan (s. Greenfield/Robinson, Nrn 6520, 6521, 6523, 6525, 6529, 6537) sind nachgedruckt in der Aufsatzsammlung u.d.T.: Whitelock, *History, Law and Literature in 10th - 11th Century England*. Variorum Reprints. Collected Studies Series. 128 (London 1981).

<sup>2</sup> 'Wulfstan' Hom. XLVI, hrsg. von A. S. Napier, *Wulfstan. Sammlung der ihm zugeschriebenen Homilien* (Berlin 1883), S. 239, Z. 1-15. Übersetzung: Wehe aber der Seele desjenigen, der seine Tür verschließt vor den Pflichten gegenüber Gott wegen der Dinge, die ihn der Teufel lehrt. So wird diesem die Tür zum Himmelreich verschlossen sein am Jüngsten Gericht. Und seien wir immer gastfreundlich. Unsere Seele wird der Gast Christi sein an dem furchtbaren Jüngsten Gericht. Laßt uns unsere Kirche lieben, denn sie wird unser Beschützer und Verteidiger sein gegen das große Feuer am Jüngsten Gericht. Und bauen wir immer Brücken, und reparieren wir sie. Und doch auch nehme jemand einen Stein und lege ihn in den faulen Sumpf, damit der Bettler mit dem anderen Fuß auf die trockene Hälfte treten kann, damit ihm bei Gott viel Almosen und großer Lohn gegeben werde. Auch bedarf die Seele am Jüngsten Gericht eines rechten Weges und der Reinheit und einer standsicheren Brücke über den glitschigen Weg des Schreckens der Höllenqual. — Diese und alle folgenden Übersetzungen ins Deutsche stammen von den Verfassern und sind ausschließlich als Lesehilfen zu den Originalen gedacht.

<sup>3</sup> Das entsprechende Material findet sich in den zahlreichen volks- und völkerkundlichen, religionsgeschichtlichen und theologischen Enzyklopädien s.v. Seele, Jenseits usw. Eine jüngere völkerkundliche Übersicht bietet M. Gouweloos, "Les aventures et le voyage de l'âme après le décès," *Le Folklore Brabançon* (1971), 93-139.

<sup>4</sup> P. Dinzelsbacher, "Representations of the way to the other world in medieval art and literature" (erscheint *Folk-Lore* 97, 1986).

<sup>5</sup> S. Dazu allgemein C. J. Bleeker, "Die religiöse Bedeutung der Brücke", *Nu-men*, Suppl. 7 (1963), 180-189; für das europäische Mittelalter speziell Peter Dinzelsbacher, *Die Jenseitsbrücke im Mittelalter*. Dissertationen der Universität Wien 104 (Wien 1973). Darauf beruhen großenteils die Artikel von K. Ranke, G. Petschel, "Brücke" in: *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* Bd. 2 (Berlin 1978), 823-838, und von A. Ebenbauer, "Brücke", in: *Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde*. 2. Aufl., Bd. 3 (Berlin 1978), 556-560, wobei letzterer sogar einen von mir dazu verfaßten Text verwendet, ohne dies anzugeben. Zusammenfassend zu den realen Brücken s. zuletzt E. Maschke, "Brücke", in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, Bd. 2, Fasc. 4 (München 1982), 724-730. I. P. Culianu, " 'Pons subtilis'. Storia e significato di un simbolo", *Aevum* 53 (1979), 301-312, begnügte sich gleicherweise damit, meine Arbeit auszuschreiben, ohne neue Quellen zu nennen; allerdings versucht er, die von mir gegebene Chronologie umzukehren, indem er die Esdras-Apokryphe als Ausgangspunkt der Vorstellung von der Jenseitsbrücke ansieht, da sie im frühen 2. Jahrhundert v. Chr. entstanden sei (306). Er erkennt, daß die Brückenepisode dabei eine Interpolation in den ursprünglichen Text ist, die erst in einer Handschrift des 10. oder 11. Jahrhunderts vorkommt (305 A. 25). Culianu wiederholt seine Polemik in seinem Büchlein 'Psychanodia I', Leiden 1983 in einer Art, mit der er sich für weitere Diskussionen selbst disqualifiziert, da sowohl die maßlos aggressive Ausdrucksweise seiner Kritik als auch seine „Methode“ unter dem für

wissenschaftliche Publikationen noch akzeptablem Niveau liegen. Nicht nur daß mir dieser Autor (nur aufgrund mangelnder Sprachkenntnisse?) Behauptungen unterschiebt, die schlichtweg nicht existieren (58ff.) und die in der Tat „absurd“ wären, er selbst baut seine umwerfende Falsifizierung der bisherigen Forschung auf Übersetzungen auf. So schließt er z.B. aufgrund einer neufranzösischen Paraphrase: „Tundal does not have to cross a ‘narrow bridge’ (59). Was steht dagegen im (ihm unbekannten) Originaltext: „pons multum angustus“ (ed. Wagner 19. s.u.A.11). Eine in meiner Dissertation noch nicht erwähnte Quelle zur Jenseitsbrücke habe ich unter dem Titel “Ida von Nijvels Brückenvision”, *Ons Geestelyk Erf* 52 (1978), 179-194 behandelt; weitere neue Texte (Wulfstan, Leofric, Anonyma von 1422, Übersetzungen) bringt der vorliegende Beitrag. Zu weiteren Aspekten cf. noch E. Reimbold, “Die Brücke als Symbol,” *Symbolon* N.F. 1, 1972, 55-78; E. Schmitz-Cliever, “Die Brücke als Symbol beim mittelalterlichen Heiltanz”, in: *Fachprosa-Studien*, ed. Gundolf Keil, Berlin 1982, 582-537.

<sup>6</sup> ed. Massimo Oldoni (Milano 1981), vol. 1, 350 ff.

<sup>7</sup> edd. Adalbert de Vogüé, Paul Antin, *Sources Chrétiennes* 265 (Paris 1980), 124 ff.

<sup>8</sup> Ep. 10, *Monumenta Germaniae historica*, Epp. sel. 1, 11.

<sup>9</sup> S. dazu Peter Dinzelbacher, *Vision und Visionsliteratur im Mittelalter* (Stuttgart 1981); id., “Jenseitsvisionen - Jenseitsreisen”, in: Volker Mertens, Ulrich Müller u.a. (Hgg.), *Die epischen Stoffe des Mittelalters* (Stuttgart, 1984), 61-80; id., *Mittelalterliche Visionsliteratur* (Darmstadt, Wiss. Buchges., i. Dr.); id., *Revelationes* (Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental, Turnhout), in Vorbereitung.

<sup>10</sup> Dinzelbacher, Jenseitsbrücke (A. 5) 19 ff.

<sup>11</sup> Fís: S. James F. Kenney, *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland, Ecclesiastical* (New York 1966), 444 f. Tractatus: K. Warnke (Hg.), *Das Buch vom Espurgatoire S. Patrice der Marie de France und seine Quelle* (Halle 1938). Tnugdál: Albrecht Wagner (Hg.), *Visio Tnugdali*, Erlangen 1882.

<sup>12</sup> ed. Paul G. Schmidt, Leipzig 1978, 12 f., 16.

<sup>13</sup> Dinzelbacher, Jenseitsbrücke (A. 5), 107 ff.

<sup>14</sup> A. S. Napier (Hg.), “An Old English Vision of Leofric, Earl of Mercia”, *Transactions of the Philological Soc.* (1907-10), 180-188, 182. Übersetzung: Nun werden die Schauungen offenbar, die der Earl Leofric sah. Ihm schien wirklich bei halb schlafendem Körper, einiges nicht immer gänzlich im Traum, dieses aber noch bestimmter, daß er über eine sehr schmale Brücke gehen mußte, und sie war sehr lang, und da floß ganz weit unten ein fürchterliches Wasser, als ob es ein Fluß wäre. Als er mitten in der Qual war, da sprach eine Stimme zu ihm: ‘Fürchte dich nicht. Bald wirst du die Brücke überqueren’. Damit war er sogleich am anderen Ende, er wußte nicht wie. Als er drüben war, kam ihm ein Führer entgegen und führte ihn zu einem sehr glänzenden und lieblichen Gelände, mit süßem Duft erfüllt.

<sup>15</sup> Die vorliegende ae. Übersetzung enthält die Brückenepisode nicht. Sie wurde vor kurzem überflüssigerweise zweimal ediert: A. M. Luiselli Fadda (Hg.), “Una inedita traduzione anglosassone della ‘Visio Pauli’”, *Studi medievali* Ser. 3, 15 (1974), 482-495; Antonette di Paolo Healey (Hg.), *The O.E. Vision of St. Paul*. *Speculum Anniversary Monographs* 2 (Cambridge, Mass. 1978). — Ebenfalls aus dem 11. Jahrhundert stammt eine Prophezeiung im Ms. P. 2. v. der Hereford Cathedral Library, die endet mit: *Auster languebit; occidens pauebit; donec montes ualios. / & pontes lubricos. & glaceos absorbeat abyssus*. Hg. v. C. B. Judge, “Anglo-saxonica in Hereford Cathedral Library”, *Harvard studies and notes in philology and literature* 16 (1934), 89-96, 92. Das erinnert an Varianten der Probebrücke,

die ähnlich geschildert werden (s.u.), doch ist es uns genauso wenig wie dem Herausgeber gelungen, den Text in einen sinnvollen Kontext zu stellen.

<sup>16</sup> Th. Silberstein, "The Vision of Leofric and Gregory's Dialogues," *RES* 9 (1933), 186-188.

<sup>17</sup> Dazu zuletzt Jacques Le Goff, *La naissance du Purgatoire* (Paris 1981), 259-73. Dort ist allerdings nur ein Teil der relevanten Sekundärliteratur zitiert, s. künftig P. Dinzelbacher, "Künstliche Unterwelten" (in Vorbereitung).

<sup>18</sup> s.u.

<sup>19</sup> ed. George Ph. Krapp, *The Legend of St. Patrick's Purgatory* (Baltimore 1900), 71. Zur weiteren Interpretation s. Dinzelbacher, *Jenseitsbrücke* (A. 5), 68 ff., 153 f., 182 f., 191. Eine Neuedition wurde angekündigt von Robert Easting, Wellington. Übersetzung: Und der hl. Johannes führte mich weiter zu einem Gewässer, das war schwarz und schmutzig anzusehen; und in diesem Gewässer waren viele Teufel, die schrieten und gräßlichen Lärm machten. Und über diesem Gewässer sah ich eine große, und wie mir schien, breite Brücke, und auf dieser Brücke sah ich einen Bischof gehen, und mit ihm viele Kleriker und verschiedene Beamte und viel anderes Gefolge. Und nachdem er eine gute Weile auf dieser Brücke gegangen war, sah ich, wie die Teufel mit großer Stärke die Pfeiler der Brücke niederrissen und -zertrümmerten, und der Bischof augenblicklich in das Wasser fiel und sein Gefolge mit ihm. Und es deuchte mich, daß ich während des Falles sah, wie ein strahlender Engel die Mitra und das Kreuz von dem Bischof nahm und verschwand. Und dann sah ich, wie viele verschiedene Seelen und Teufel den Bischof zu sich nahmen, wobei sie ihn zertrümmerten, zogen und in das schwarze Wasser tauchten. Und er erlitt darin viele verschiedene Qualen und viel Pein. Und der hl. Johannes sagte: 'Das war ein Bischof, der nicht gut zur Freude Gottes lebte, wie sein Weihegrad und sein Stand erforderten; und dafür wird er nun mit verschiedenen Qualen gequält. Diese Brücke, die du siehst, war eine Brücke, die er in der Welt, während er lebte, zur Erleichterung für das Volk machen ließ, aber ebenso ließ er sie vor allem aus Ruhmsucht machen, und es waren auch die Mittel, mit denen sie gemacht wurde, unrecht erworben, Gold und Silber, von seiner Beamtenschaft jährlich eingezogen, wodurch er die Sünde vieler Leute in Unmäßigkeit erhielt. Deshalb hat Gott diesen Teufeln gestattet, die Brücke niederzureißen, denn wenn sie mit gerecht erworbenem Gut gemacht worden wäre, hätte sie ihn jetzt mit großer Festigkeit gestützt.

<sup>20</sup> Literatur bei Dinzelbacher, *Vision* (A. 9), 219, dazu T. W. Petersen, "Budskabet til menigheden", *Den ikonografiske Post* 1 (1975).

<sup>21</sup> Die Visionen bei Gregor v. Tours, Gregor d. Gr., *Tundals Vision*.

<sup>22</sup> C. Horstman (Hg.), *Yorkshire Writers*. Library of Early English Writers I (London 1895), 392.

<sup>23</sup> ed. Hans Hecht, in: *Bibliothek der ags. Prosa*. Bd. 5,1 (Leipzig 1907), 318 f. Übersetzung: er sagte ... , daß es eine Brücke gäbe und unter dieser ein sehr schwarzer und dunkler Fluß flösse, ... wahrhaftig war die Probe auf der vorgenannten Brücke, daß ein jedweder sündiger Mensch, der über die Brücke gehen wollte, von dort hinabgleiten würde...

<sup>24</sup> Auch dieser Text wurde kurz hintereinander zweimal ediert: M. Konrath, "Eine altenglische Vision vom Jenseits", *ASNSL* 139 (1919), 30-46 und K. Sisam, "An O.E. Translation of a Letter from Wynfrith to Eadburga (a.d. 716-7) in Cotton Ms. Otho C. 1.", *MLR* 18 (1923), 253-272, wiederabgedruckt in id., *Studies in the History of O.E. Literature* (Oxford 1953), 212-224. Hier zitiert nach Konrath 42. Übersetzung: ... und er sah dort einen feurigen Fluß, der war angefüllt mit siedendem Pech. Und er brannte im Innern überall. Und sie war von schrecklicher

Furcht. Und dort war ein Baumstamm über den Fluß, einer Brücke gleich. Dann eilten die heiligen Seelen zu dieser Brücke von der Versammlung, wo sie gewesen waren. Und sie strebten danach, daß sie über den Fluß gingen. Dann gingen einige von ihnen entschlossen über die Brücke, und einige von ihnen glitten von dem Baumstamm ab, so daß sie in den Fluß der Qualen hinabfielen.

<sup>25</sup> Frederic C. Tubach, *Index Exemplorum*, FFC 204 (Helsinki 1969), nr.784 f., hat das Exempel irrtümlich in zwei Nummern gespalten, mit Druckfehler Dialogi 4,27 statt richtig 4,37.

<sup>26</sup> ed. M. M. Banks, EETS.OS. 126, 127 (London 1904/5), dciii, 403. Übersetzung: Der hl. Gregor erzählt, wie da einmal in Rom ein Ritter war, der sterbenskrank wurde und in Ekstase lag. Und als er wieder zu sich kam, sagte er, daß er eine Brücke gesehen hatte, und darunter strömte ein großes, schwarzes Wasser, das unerträgliche Gerüche und Gestank ausströmte. Und nachdem er diese Brücke überquert hatte, waren auf der anderen Seite dieses Gewässers schöne und grüne Wiesen, voll von lieblichen, wohlduftenden Blumen. Und da sah er eine große Gesellschaft weißer Männer in Alben... Es gab viele Wohnstätten am Ufer dieses Gewässers; und er sagte, daß er viele auf der Brücke sah, die, weil sie den üblen Geruch über dem Wasser spürten, in es hineinfielen.

<sup>27</sup> ed. F. J. Furnivall, EETS. O.S. 119, 123 (London 1901/3), vs. 1385 ff., 50 ff. Übersetzung: Ich sah eine höchst erstaunliche Brücke, ein grimmiges Gewässer war darunter, schwarz und tief und widerlich stinkend. Schrecklichen Lärm machte es im Fließen — es strömte zur Hölle hinab. Als ich es sah, hatte ich großen Schrecken. Jenseits der Brücke lag ein Land, das schönste, das Gott je sein ließ... Ich sah da Leute von so schönem Aussehen, deren Wohnstätten in Freude gesetzt waren. All die Leute, die ich da sah, waren so schön wie Engel. Ich sah da Häuser mit reicher Einrichtung, alle von Gold, glänzend wie Feuer...

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.* vs. 1467 ff., 53. Übersetzung: Als er die Brücke überqueren wollte, geschah es: seine Füße begannen abzugleiten, und er war daran, in das Wasser zu fallen, das bitterer als Galle war; die Teufel wähten wohl, ihn zu fangen. Dann aber hing er an der Brücke: die Teufel schlugen ihre Haken in seine Kniee, um ihn (an seinen) Schenkeln herunter zu ziehen und zu zerstückeln. Schöne Männer kamen dazu — aber ich weiß nicht, wie — und zogen ihn an seinen Armen hinauf; sie wollten ihn nicht in diesen völligen Untergang hinabfallen lassen. Er hatte Gott mit einer guten Tat gefallen, deshalb halfen sie ihm in seiner Not.

<sup>29</sup> S. Peter Dinzelbacher, *Handbuch zur mittelalterlichen Visionsliteratur*, Bd. 1 (in Vorbereitung).

<sup>30</sup> ed. C. Horstmann, "Die Sprüche des h. Bernhard und die Vision des h. Paulus nach Ms. Laud 108", *ASNSL* 52 (1874), 33-38, 35. Übersetzung: Eine riesenhohle und gefährliche Brücke war über die stinkende Flut gesetzt, um einen Übergang bereit zu haben, um die guten Seelen hinüberkommen zu lassen.

<sup>31</sup> ed. R. Morris, *An O. E. Miscellany*. EETS. OS. 49 (London 1872), 223-232, 224 f. Übersetzung: Nach dem sah er da, wo er stand, eine erstaunlich schreckliche, gräuliche Flut, und in der Flut sah er dort viele teuflische Tiere... Über dem Wasser sah er eine erstaunlich lange und hohe Brücke liegen, und über diese Brücke gingen dann die Seelen der guten, gerechten Menschen sicher, ohne Leid in Wort oder Tat und auch ohne jeden Schrecken. Die Seelen der Sünder fallen da, wie ich euch sage, hinunter, um in der Pein zu bleiben... Denn jede Kreatur soll über diese Brücke gehen, jeder ohne Ausnahme, und mehr oder weniger soll er gequält werden, je nach dem, wie er es hier (auf Erden) verdient hat.

<sup>32</sup> ed. E. Kölbing, "Eine bisher unbekannte me. Version von S. Pauli Höllenfahrt", *ESL* 22, 1894, 134-139, 135.

<sup>33</sup> ed. Morris (A. 31) 210-222; ed. Ella K. Whiting, EETS.OS. 184 (London 1931), nr. 16, 111 ff.

<sup>34</sup> Zur Datierung zuletzt Herrad Spilling, *Die Visio Tnugdali* (München 1975), Exkurs II, 226 ff. Vgl. auch Nigel Palmer 'Visio Tnugdali' (München 1982), 410 f.

<sup>35</sup> P. Dinzelbacher, "Die Vision Alberichs und die Esdras-Apokryphe", *Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktiner-Ordens* 87 (1976), 435-442.

<sup>36</sup> edd. Ch. d'Evelyn, A. J. Mill, EETS. OS. 235 (London 1956), 101 ff., vs. 455 ff.; ed. C. Horstmann, EETS. OS. 87 (London 1887), 212, vs. 409 ff. Cf. M. Görlach, *The Textual Tradition of the S.E. Legendary* (Leeds 1974), 149 ff. Übersetzung: So kam er zu einem sehr großen, reichlich tiefen und breiten Gewässer. Ein dichter Nebel, der ganz faulig nach Schwefel und anderem Schrecklichem stank, zog aus diesem Gewässer. So starken Gestank hatte er niemals erlebt, so daß er bei aller Pein der Welt nicht da bleiben konnte. Eine Brücke war über dem Gewässer — eine schmalere konnte es nicht geben —, der Rauch darüber war so dick, daß er kaum sehen konnte. 'Ha', sagten die bösen Teufel, 'wir sagen dir bestimmt, daß unter dem Wasser, ganz tief, der Hölleneingang ist. Und das sollst du bald wissen, denn du sollst weiter und über dieses Schwitzwasser diese Brücke hinaufgehen'. Sie nahmen diesen seligen Ritter und zogen ihn zur Brücke hinauf und zwangen ihn, gegen seinen Willen und sehr zu seiner Plage, darauf zu gehen. Denn drei Dinge waren bei dieser Brücke schlimm genug: Eines war, daß sie so hoch war, daß man kaum aus Furcht hinaufgehen und so tief hinunter so grauenhafte Aussicht haben konnte. Das andere war, daß sie so eng war, daß man kaum einen Fuß darauf setzen konnte, ohne hinunterzufallen. Das dritte, daß sie so glatt war, daß man darauf nicht gehen konnte, ohne auszugleiten und hinunterzufallen. Und in so einer Lage war er niemals gewesen. Diese drei Dinge versetzten diesen seligen Ritter in große Furcht, denn sie war eng, glitschig und hoch, daß er überall ausgleiten und zur Hölle stürzen könnte. Darauf wurde er mit Gewalt gebracht und mußte er hinauf gehen; Und so geschickt hätte er nicht sein können. Und gleich dachte er an Jesus Christus, der ihn schon vorher oft gerettet hatte, und rief seinen hl. Namen, daß er ihm hier helfe. Und er begann, kühner weiterzugehen. Und je weiter er kam, desto tapferer wurde er, dachte ihm, und er schöpfte stärker Mut. Und desto breiter wurde sein Weg, als er so weiter zog, daß er so breit wurde, daß da gerade ein Wagen darauf paßte, und so lang, daß zwei Wagen einander recht gut begegnen konnten.

<sup>37</sup> ed. E. Kölbing, "Zwei me. bearbeitungen der sage von St. Patrik's purgatorium", *ESt* 1 (1877), 57-121, 106 ff., str. 117 ff. Übersetzung: Und Owen sah eine sehr schwierige, enge Brücke darüberliegen. Die Teufel sagten da: "Also, Herr Ritter, siehst du das? Das ist die Paradiesesbrücke, über die du gehen mußt! Und wir werden dich mit Steinen bewerfen und der Wind wird dich hinunterblasen und dir viel Leid schaffen. Du wirst wegen all dessen nicht bis zur Mitte [kommen], sondern wenn du fällst, zu unseren anderen Gefährten [gehören]. Und wenn du hinuntergefallen bist, dann werden alle unsere Genossen kommen und dich mit ihren Haken bearbeiten. Wir werden dich ein neues Spiel lehren — du hast uns ja manchen Tag gedient — und dich zur Hölle führen". Owen betrachtete die Brücke schmerzlich und das dunkle, schwarze Wasser darunter. Und er begann sich arg zu fürchten, denn um eines sorgte er sich: Niemals bewegten sich Stäubchen in den Sonnenstrahlen dichter als die Teufel. Die Brücke war so hoch wie ein Turm und scharf wie ein Rasiermesser, und eng war sie auch, und das Wasser, das darunter floß, brannte mit Blitz und Donner: das bereitete ihm viel Weh. Da gibt es gewiß keinen Kleriker, der mit Tinte auch nur die Hälfte der Qualen unter der Paradiesesbrücke beschreiben könnte, keinen Menschen, der sie bedenken, auch

keinen Theologen, der sie erraten könnte. So sagt uns das Meßbuch: hier ist geradewegs der Hölleneingang. Der hl. Paulus bezeugt es: Wer von der Brücke hinunterfällt, für den gibt es keine Rettung, weder mehr noch minder.

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.* 118, vs. 413 ff. Übersetzung: Da war über dem Wasser eine Brücke, weit schärfer als irgendein Glas. Sie war eng, und sie war hoch, — kaum, daß er das andere Ende sah. Die Mitte war hoch, das Ende nieder, sie war wie ein gekrümmter Bogen. Zuerst setzte er einen Fuß darauf und rief sofort Jesus an. Er fühlte, daß der Fuß fest stand, und setzte den anderen Fuß dazu. Er rief an diesem Ort Jesus zu Hilfe, der immer sein wird und immer war. Die Brücke ward ein bißchen breiter, Herr Owen ward da etwas heit'rer.

<sup>39</sup> ed. L. Toulmin Smith, "St. Patrick's Purgatory, and the knight, Sir Owen", *Est* 9 (1886), 1-12, 9, vs. 413 ff. Übersetzung: Über dem Wasser war eine Brücke, die war glatter als irgendein Glas. Davon wurde er böse erschreckt: sie war so scharf wie nur je ein Schwert.

<sup>40</sup> L. L. Hammerich (Hg.), *Visiones Georgii*. Det Kgl. Danske Videnskabernes Selskab. Hist.-filolog. Meddel. 18/2. (København 1930), 158 f., 190 ff.

<sup>41</sup> Dinzelbacher, *Jenseitsbrücke* 107 ff.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.* 117.

<sup>43</sup> Pierce Butler, *Legenda Aurea - Légende Dorée - Golden Legend* (Diss. Baltimore 1899), 121.

<sup>44</sup> Ch.d'Evelyn, „English Translations of Legenda Aurea", J. E. Wells, ed., *A Manual of Writings in Middle English*. Reed. J. B. Severs, A. E. Hartung. Bd 2. (Hartford 1970), 430ff.

<sup>45</sup> Eine beachtenswerte Erklärung für seine Beliebtheit in der mittelalterlichen Literatur bietet Tom C. Gardner, *The Theater of Hell* (Diss. Berkeley, Calif. 1976).

<sup>46</sup> Dazu zuletzt Nigel F. Palmer, "Visio Tnugdali" (München 1982), cf. meine Rezension in *PBB* (T) (im Druck) (P.D.)

<sup>47</sup> Albrecht Wagner (Hg.), *Tundale* (Halle 1893), 23 f., mit der Verszählung Gardiners (s. nächste Anmerkung). Übersetzung: Er sah eine Brücke über den Pfuhl, die von der einen Seite zu der anderen reichte. Es waren tausend Schritte in der Länge des Weges, und sie war kaum einen Fuß breit. Die Brücke war ganz bebend. Keiner durfte sie überqueren, weder Gelehrter noch Unwissender, weder Jungfrau noch Frau, außer heiligen Menschen mit vollkommenem Lebenswandel. Viele Seelen sah er herunterfallen von der Brücke, die so schmal war. Er sah keinen, der die Brücke überqueren konnte, außer einem Priester, der ein Pilger ins Heilige Land war.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid.* 32 ff. Die neue Edition von Eileen Gardiner, *The Vision of Tundale* (Diss. Fordham Univ. N.Y. 1980) bringt neben zahlreichen den Sinn nicht verändernden variae lectiones (orthographische Varianten, Verwendung von Synonyma) auch einige, die gewisse inhaltliche Unterschiede zum Ausdruck bringen: 115, vs. 408: Fro þo ton to þo tofur lygge; 132, vs. 574: ...walle. vs. 578: kynche (statt : burden); Zusatz in R : vs. 579\*-80\*: Hit was stolne of his negheboures medowe / Pat stode hym to ful lytelle prow; 133, vs. 588: For hym is ordeynyd þis payn. 139, vs. 649: He was wonderly sor aferd þan. 141, vs. 662: sore to blede,. Übersetzung: Über dem See sahen sie eine sehr lange, enge Brücke liegen, sie schien zwei Meilen lang und kaum eine Hand breit, mit scharfen Stacheln von Eisen und Stahl war sie dicht besetzt und schmerzvoll anzufühlen. Niemand konnte die Brücke dort überqueren, ohne daß seine Füße schmerzvoll verletzt wurden. Zwei schreckliche Tiere in dem See zogen in die Nähe der Brücke, um hier Beute an den Seelen zu nehmen, die von der Brücke herabfielen; um sie zu verschlingen, waren sie immer aufgebäumt. Diese schrecklichen Tiere waren sehr groß, die Seelen, die hinabfielen,

waren ihre Speise. Tundal sah dort zwei Tiere, und er sah Feuer aus ihrem Mund strömen. Das Feuer, das er von ihrem Mund strömen sah, machte das Wasser ganz heiß siedend. Auf der Brücke sah er jemanden stehen mit einer Last Korn auf dem Rücken, schmerzvolle Schreie ausstoßend, und seine Seele jammerte erbarlungswürdig. Die Stacheln stachen seine Füße schmerzvoll, er fürchtete die zwei Tiere mehr, die immer aufgebäumt waren, um ihn zu verschlingen, wenn er von der Brücke herabgefallen war. Tundal frug den strahlenden Engel: 'Was bedeutet dieser schreckliche Anblick?' Wiederum antwortete der Engel: 'Für dich und andere ist dies die Strafe, die Menschen ihrer Reichtümer beraubt haben oder irgendein Gut geraubt haben, das Gottes ist, ... und der, den du auf der Brücke stehen siehst, gen Himmel so bitterlich weinend: Aus der heiligen Kirche stahl er sie. Sie waren versteuert und vom Zoll abgezählt, daher bezahlt er sie ganz teuer, die Tat mit der Qual, die er hier hat. Über diese Brücke mußt du jetzt gehen, und bei dir wirst du eine wilde Kuh führen. Gib Acht, daß du sie vorsichtig hinüberführst, und sei vorsichtig, nicht zu fallen. Denn wenn du diese Qual überstanden hast, sollst du sie mir hier wieder abgeben. Du mußt die Kuh ganz hinüberführen, denn du hast die Kuh deiner Verwandtschaft gestohlen.' Als Tundal schlecht aussehend dastand, wurde eine wilde Kuh ihm in die Hände gegeben. Trotz des Zehnten mußte er unbedingt die Kuh nehmen und sie von hier wegführen. Ihm deucht, es sei eine sehr große Pein, aber er konnte nicht länger dort bleiben. Er tat, wie ihm der Engel befohlen hatte: Er nahm die Kuh bei dem Horn, er streichelte die Kuh, soviel er nur konnte, und führte sie geradewegs zur Brücke. Als er auf der Brücke war, wollte die Kuh nicht weitergehen. Er sah, wie die Tiere in dem See herbeikamen, um hier Beute zu nehmen. Die Kuh wäre fast zur einen Seite hinabgefallen und Tundal zur anderen Seite. Tundal war voller Furcht in diesem Augenblick, mit großem Schmerz ging er wieder weiter. Sie gingen weiter, was ihm sehr schwierig vorkam, bis sie zur Mitte kamen. Dort trafen sie den, der das Korn trug. Sie glaubten, daß sie beide verloren seien, so eng war dann die Brücke, daß keiner an dem anderen vorbeigehen konnte. Für sie beide war dies eine große Qual, denn keiner konnte wieder umkehren. Keiner traute sich, um alles in der Welt, hinter sich zu schauen, so waren sie in Furcht. Die scharfen Spieße, auf denen sie gingen, machten ihre beiden Füße blutig, so daß das Blut auf beiden Seiten hinabrann in das Wasser.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. P. Dinzelsbacher, "Die Messersäule", *Bayerisches Jahrbuch f. Volkskunde* 1980/1, 41-54.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. mit weiteren me. Beispielen Albert Auer, *Leidenstheologie im Spätmittelalter* (St. Ottilien 1952).

<sup>51</sup> ed. Horstman (A. 22), II, 456. Übersetzung:

Liebe mich nur über alles; ...

Und das ist mit lieber, als wenn du gingest

Über einen Baumstamm, der zum Himmel stünde,

Der ganz durchstoßen wäre mit scharfen Rasiernessern.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid.* I, 112. Übersetzung: Liebe mich über alles wie einen Herrn, und gib mir dein Herz ganz heilig; und dies gefällt mir mehr, so wie ich es will, als wenn du auf einen Hügel hinaufklimmen würdest, voll von scharfen Rasiernessern, die dich schauerlich schneiden, daß dein Fleisch von den Knochen weghinge. Amen.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Dinzelsbacher, *Jenseitsbrücke* (A. 5), 47 f., 147 ff.; Abbildung bei Dinzelsbacher, *Messersäule* (A. 49), 45.

<sup>54</sup> Farbig abgebildet bei John Beckwith, *Die Kunst des frühen Mittelalters* (München 1967), 201, Abb. 189. Weder er noch die übrige Literatur geht auf diese ikonographische Besonderheit ein, cf. Hanns Swarzenski, *Monuments of Romanesque Art*

(London <sup>2</sup>1974), nr. 325; M. Chamot, *English Mediaeval Enamels* (London 1930), 4 f., 25 f., nr. 10; O. Elfrida Saunders, *English Illumination* (Firenze 1928), Pl. 28.

<sup>55</sup> Während in der Literatur mitunter die Bezeichnung "bridgework" auch auf andere Aspekte des Brückenbaus angewendet wird, erscheinen in den Quellen mindestens zwei Bezeichnungen, ae. *brycgbōt* und ae. *brycggeuorc*, wobei *brycgbōt* auf das Brückenbauregal festgelegt zu sein scheint.

<sup>56</sup> S. dazu: H. Boehmer, *Kirche und Staat in England und in der Normandie im 11. und 12. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig 1899), 410; K. Jost, "Einige Wulfstantexte und ihre Quellen", *Anglia* 56 (1932), 288-301; Ders., *Wulfstanstudien* (A. 1), 237-238; F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, Bd. 2, 2 (Halle 1912), 357, 618-619; F. J. Mone, "Zur Geschichte und Kritik der angelsächsischen Gesetze", ders., *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte der deutschen Literatur und Sprache* Bd 1 (Aachen, Leipzig 1830), 482-546, bes. 484-500; R. Selborne, *Ancient Facts and Fictions concerning Churches and Tithes*. 2. Aufl. (London, 1892), 216; C. Vogel, *Les 'Libri poenitentiales'*. Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental. 27 (Turnhout 1978), 86-87. A. J. Frantzen, "The Tradition of Penitentials in Anglo-Saxon England", *Anglo-Saxon England* 11 (1982) 45-49; ders., *The Literature of Penance in Anglo-Saxon England*, New Brunswick, N.J. 1983. — Ein Teil der Textgruppe wurde u.d.T. *Canons of Edgar Wulfstan* zugewiesen (ed. R. G. Fowler. EETS.OS.266. London 1972). Weder ist eine eindeutige Herkunft der Texte erkennbar, noch kann von einem einheitlichen zeitlichen Rahmen ausgegangen werden, in den die gesamte Textgruppe leicht einzuordnen wäre; Thorpe dürfte sich bei seiner Edition dieser Textgruppe maßgeblich von D. Wilkins (*Concilia Magnae Britanniae*. Bd. 1. London 1737) leiten gelassen haben, der einiges aus dieser Textgruppe abdruckt, und weniger von der handschriftlichen Überlieferung. Manche Teile des hier einschlägigen Poenentiale, allerdings nicht unser Text, stehen mit der älteren ae. Bußliteratur in Verbindung (s. Mone, wie oben, 485, Frantzen 1982, wie oben, 47-48). Jost (*Wulfstanstudien*, loc.cit.) zieht das Poenentiale unter der Bezeichnung "*Of powerful Men*" heran. Während H. W. Keim ("Aepelwold und die Mönchsreform", *Anglia* 41, 1917, 440-441) den Text ohne stichhaltige Gründe Aethelwold von Winchester zuwies, bezeichnete F. Barlow (*The English Church*. London 1963, 65 Fn. 4 mit 268 Fn.2) ihn ohne Angabe von Gründen als Werk Wulfstans. Durch seinen neuen Herausgeber R. Fowler ("An Old English Handbook for the Use of a Confessor", *Anglia* 83, 1965, 26-32) wurde der Text als Bestandteil des von Fowler rekonstruierten *Handbook* begriffen, wogegen Frantzen (1982, wie oben, 46, 1983, wie oben, 168f.) Bedenken angemeldet hat. Frantzen folgte Ker (*A Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*. Oxford 1957, 521-522) in der Datierung der Handschriften in die Mitte des 11. Jahrhunderts.

<sup>57</sup> B. Thorpe, Hrsg., *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*. Quartoed. (London 1840), 414. Vgl. Mone, 544-545 (Nr XVII). Engl. Übersetzung bei Thorpe, loc.cit. Hier zitiert nach der Ausgabe von Fowler, a.a.O. (wie A.56), 29. Übersetzung: 13. Bußen werden vergeben auf verschiedene Art, und ein Mann kann auch mit Almosen büßen. 14. Derjenige, der die Möglichkeit hat, soll eine Kirche zum Lob Gottes errichten; und, wenn er die Mittel hat, soll er Land dazu geben; und junge Männer sollen hinzugezogen werden, die ihm dienen können, und sie sollen täglich Gott dienen; und er soll auch überall ein Wohltäter für Gottes Kirche sein; und er soll das Reisen der Leute ermöglichen mit Brücken über tiefe Wasser und über faule Wege; und er soll aus Liebe zu Gott verteilen, was er hat, bis zur Grenze dessen, was er hat; und er soll bereitwillig armen Menschen helfen, Witwen und Stiefkindern und Fremden; und er soll seine eigenen Sklaven befreien und die Sklaven anderer Menschen freikaufen; und besonders arme, ausgeplünderte Men-

schen; und er soll denen zu essen geben, die es brauchen, und Kleidung, Wohnung und Feuer, Bad und Bett, zu ihrem und seinem Nutzen; er soll überall eifrig Fürbitte erwirken durch Messgesänge und Psalmen; und aus Liebe zu seinem Herrn soll er sich selbst züchtigen durch Abstinenz von Fleisch und Getränk und von aller körperlicher Lust.

<sup>58</sup> *par-to* (vgl. Campbell, § 678, Luick, § 362), *bricgum* (vgl. Luick, § 287) Vgl. Liebermann, Gesetze, Bd 2,2, 357, der auf Textzusammenhänge mit VI Atr 10,2 52 und zu Gesetzen Knuts hinweist; Frantzen (wie Anm. 56, 1982, S. 46).

<sup>59</sup> S.u.a. L. Bieler, Hrsg., *The Irish Penitentials*. Scriptores latini Hiberniae. 5 (Dublin 1963); J. Raith, Hrsg., *Die altenglische Version des Halitgarschen Bußbuches* (sog. *Poenitentiale Pseudo-Egberti*). 2. Aufl. Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa. 12 (Darmstadt 1964); H. Sauer, Hrsg., *Theodulfi Capitula in England*. Texte und Untersuchungen zur Englischen Philologie. 8 (München 1978); R. Spindler, Hrsg., *Das altenglische Bußbuch* (sog. *Confessionale Pseudo-Egberti*). (Leipzig 1934); H. Wasserschleben, Hrsg., *Die Bussordnungen der abendländischen Kirche* (Halle 1851); ders., Hrsg., *Die irische Kanonensammlung*. 2. Aufl. (Leipzig 1885); R. Kottje, *Die Bussbücher Halitgars von Cambrai und des Hrabanus Maurus*. Beiträge zur Geschichte und Quellenkunde des Mittelalters. 8. (Berlin, New York 1980).

<sup>60</sup> S.u.a. B. Albers, "Wann sind die Beda-Egbert'schen Bussbücher entstanden?", *Archiv für katholisches Kirchenrecht* 81 (1902), 393-420; P. W. Finsterwalder, *Die Canones Theodori Cantuariensis und ihre Überlieferungsformen*. Weimar 1919; A. J. Frantzen, "The Significance of the Frankish Penitentials", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 30 (1979), 409ff.; ders., "The Tradition of Penitentials in Anglo-Saxon England" (A.56), 23-56; ders., Art. "Frühe volkssprachliche Übersetzungen von Bussbüchern", *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 2 (1982), 1122-1123; ders., *The Literature of Penance* (A.56); L. Hardinge, *The Celtic Church in Britain* (London 1972); Kathleen Hughes, *The Church in Early Irish Society* (London 1966); J. A. Jungmann, *Die lateinischen Bußriten in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*. Forschungen zur Geschichte des innerkirchlichen Lebens. 3/4 (Innsbruck 1932); M. L. W. Laistner, "Was Bede the Author of a Penitential?", ders., *The Intellectual Heritage of the Early Middle Ages*. Ed. C. G. Starr (Ithaca, N.Y. 1957), 165-177; G. LeBras, Art. "Pénitence", *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* 12, 1160 ff.; A. Lepicier, *Indulgences*. 3rd engl. ed. (London 1906), 236-241; J. T. McNeill, *The Celtic Penitentials*. Paris 1923, auch in: *Revue celtique* 39 (1922), 257 ff., 40 (1923), 320-341; ders., H. Gamer, *Medieval Handbooks of Penance*. Records of Civilization. 29. (New York 1938); F. Nikolasch, C. Vogel, Art. "Bußdisziplin und Bußriten", *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 2 (1982), 1130-1137; T. P. Oakley, *English Penitential Discipline and Anglo-saxon Law in Their Joint Influence*. Studies in History, Economics and Public Law. 107,2. (New York 1923), bes. 52, 95-99, 135; ders., "The Cooperation of Medieval Penance and Secular Law", *Speculum* 7 (1932), 515-524; ders., "Commutations and Redemptions of Penance in the Penitentials", *Catholic Historical Review* 17 (1933), 341-351; ders., "The Origins of Irish Penitential Discipline", ebd. 19 (1935), 320-332; ders., "Alleviation of Penance in Continental Penitentials", *Speculum* 12 (1937), 488-502; ders., "Celtic Penance", *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* 52 (1938), 147-164; ders., "The Penitentials as Sources for Medieval History", *Speculum* 15 (1940), 210-233; G. Paganini, "Presenza dei penitentiali irlandesi nel pensiero medievale", *Studia et documenta historiae et iuris* 33 (1967), 359-366; N. Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablasses*, Bd 2 (Paderborn 1922), 247-252, Bd 3 (1923), 439-443; Rosamund Pierce, "The 'Frankish' Penitentials", *Studies in Church History* 11 (1975), 31-39; B. Poschmann, *Die abendländische Kirchenbuße im frühen Mittelalter*. Breslauer Studien zur historischen Theologie. 16. (Breslau 1930); Sauer (A.1); H. J. Schmitz, *Die Bußbücher und die*

*Bußdisziplin der Kirche* (Mainz 1883); ders., *Die Bußbücher und das kanonische Bußverfahren* (Düsseldorf 1898); G. Schnürer, *Kirche und Kultur im Mittelalter* Bd 2, 2. Aufl. (Paderborn 1929), 433-455; O. D. Watkins, *A History of Penance*. Bd 2 (London 1920), 756-769.

<sup>61</sup> *Old English Homilies of the 12th and 13th Centuries*. Hrsg. von R. Morris. Bd 1. EETS.OS. 29 (London 1867), 31. Übersetzung: Der Priester wolle ihm befehlen, daß er sein Eigentum oder seinen Hof nehme und es den armen Menschen austerteile oder für Brücken oder für Kirchenbau oder für einen Zweck, für den es gut geeignet ist, aus Liebe zu Christus.

<sup>62</sup> Gild of the Holy Cross, Birmingham, in: *English Gilds* Hrsg. von T. Smith, L. Brentano. EETS.OS. 40 (London 1870), 249 (Report of the Commissioners of Edward VI). Die Brückenbrüder waren verschiedentlich Gegenstand von Untersuchungen: Dinzelbacher (A.5), 186-187; Marjorie Nice Boyer, "The Bridge-Building Brotherhoods", *Speculum* 39 (1964), 635-650 (mit Lit.); dies., *The Medieval French Bridges*. Publications of the Medieval Academy of America. 84 (Cambridge, Mass. 1976); dies., Art. "Bridgebuilding", *New Catholic Encyclopaedia* Bd 2 (San Francisco 1967), 798; F. Falk, "Die Kirche und der Brückenbau im Mittelalter", *Historisch-politische Blätter für das katholische Deutschland* 87 (1881), 89-110, 184-194, 245-259; L. Bruguier-Roure, "Les constructeurs de ponts au moyen âge", *Bulletin monumental* 41 (1875), 225-249. Auf den Zusammenhang des Brückenbaus mit dem Ablasswesen wies mehrfach N. Paulus hin. S. Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablasses* (wie Anm. 60); ders., "Brückenablässe", *Historisch-politische Blätter für das katholische Deutschland* 151 (1913), 20-36.

<sup>63</sup> *The Lay Folks Mass Book*. Hrsg. von T. F. Simmons. EETS.OS. 71 (London 1879), 65. S.a. H. G. Pfander, "Some Medieval Manuals of Religious Instruction in England and Observations on Chaucer's Parson's Tale", *JEGP* 36 (1936), 243-258. Übersetzung: alle Pilger und Waller zum Heiligen Land und für alle, die Gottes Wege gegangen sind oder gehen werden; und für diejenigen, die Brücken und Straßen bauen und ausbessern, damit Gott uns einen Anteil von deren guten Taten schenke und ihnen von den unsrigen.

<sup>64</sup> S.z.B. "Christ's Fifth Complaint", in: *Political, Religious and Love Poems*. Hrsg. von F. J. Furnivall. EETS.OS. 15 (London 1866), 213:

"Pe poore peple þou doist oppresse  
Wiþ sleitis and wilis ful manye also;  
Þou makist chirchis, and doist singe messe,  
And mendist weies, men on to go;  
And sum men þee banne, & summë blesse:  
Which schal y heere of þeisë two?  
If þou wolt haue grace as þou doist gesse,  
Lete al fulsnes be fleemyd þee fro."

Übersetzung:

Die armen Leute unterdrückst du auf diese Weise  
Mit sehr viel Gleichgültigkeit und Eigenwilligkeit.  
Du baust Kirchen und singst die Messe.  
Und besserst Wege aus, damit die Menschen darauf gehen.  
Und einige Menschen bannen dich, und einige segnen dich.  
Welche von beiden soll ich hören?  
Wenn du Gnade haben willst, wie du beabsichtigtst,  
Laß alle Falschheit von dir entfliehen.

<sup>65</sup> Diese Einschränkung beruht auf der allgemeinen Vorsicht gegenüber liturgiegeschichtlichen Quellen, wie sie etwa in der Ordinesforschung geübt wird. S.

dazu Janet L. Nelson, "Ritual and Reality in the Early Medieval Ordines", *Studies in Church History* 11 (1975), 41-51; H. Kleinschmidt, *Untersuchungen über das englische Königtum im 10. Jahrhundert*. Göttinger Bausteine zur Geschichtswissenschaft. 49 (Göttingen, Frankfurt, Zürich 1979), 106-109.

<sup>66</sup> *Registrum palatinum Dunelmense. The Register of Richard de Kellawe, Lord Palatine and Bishop of Durham 1311-1316*. Ed. T. D. Hardy. RS 62. (London 1873-4), Bd 1, 442, 525, 615, 641, 506, 507, Bd 2, 280, 683. Vgl. Falk (A.62), 247-248.

<sup>67</sup> *Registrum*, Bd 2, 683-4.

<sup>68</sup> Es erscheint nicht ausgeschlossen, daß die Zahl der genannten Belege innerhalb und außerhalb des umrissenen Belegzeitraums beträchtlich vermehrt werden kann. S. Falk, 337.

<sup>69</sup> J. Jusserand, "La vie nomade et les ponts d'Angleterre au Moyen-Age", *RH* 19 (1882), 267 Fn. 1.

<sup>70</sup> Canons, ed. Thorpe, OE Hom., ed. Morris, Lay Folks Mass Books, ed. Simmons, Reg. Dunelm., Schenkung Heinrichs VIII.

<sup>71</sup> 'Wulfstan' Hom. XLVI, Canons, ed. Thorpe, Lay Folks Mass Books, ed. Simmons, Gilds of the Holy Cross, Birmingham, eds. Smith, Brentano, Reg. Dun., Schenkung Heinrichs VIII.

<sup>72</sup> An. *brú* 'Brücke', 'Steinpflaster', 'Knüppeldamm'; An. *bryggja* 'Brücke', 'Hafendamm', 'Landungsplatz', 'Schiffsbrücke', 'Damm', 'Kai' (s. Vries, An. etym. Wb, Holthausen, Vgl. u. etym. WB. d. Awnord.); Dän. *brø* 'Brücke', 'Steg', 'Pflaster' (s. Ordbog over der danske sprog); Isl. *bru* 'Brücke', *bryggja* 'Brücke' (Vries, An. etym. WB); Norw. *bru*, *bro* 'Brücke', 'Laufbrücke', 'Steg', 'Schlitten', Norw. *brygge* 'Damm', 'Kai', 'Schiffslande', 'Werft' (Vries, An. etym. WB); Schwed. *bro* 'Brücke', *brygga* 'Brücke', 'Landungsbrücke' (Vries, An. etym. WB).

<sup>73</sup> S. WP II, 207, Holthausen Ae. etym. WB s.v.

<sup>74</sup> *The Battle of Maldon*, ed. D. G. Scragg. Manchester 1981. VV 74, 78 = 'Furt'

<sup>75</sup> S. E. V. Gordon, Hrsg., *The Battle of Maldon*. 7th impr. London 1968, S. 3 mit Fn 4. Vgl. OED s.v. *bridge*.

<sup>76</sup> Ortsnamen auf ae. *-ford* führen im allgemeinen eine Bezeichnung für ein Natur- oder Landschaftsphänomen im ersten Bestandteil (z.B. Sandford, Stanford, Stratford), Ortsnamen auf ae. *-brycg* hingegen führen im ersten Bestandteil in der Regel Personen- oder Flußnamen (z.B. Tonbridge < \*Tunnanbrycge, Cambridge < Grantebrycg). Es muß also nicht nur eine lexikalische, sondern auch eine begriffliche Differenzierung zwischen 'Brücke' und 'Furt' vorgelegen haben. Für urkundliche Belege s. KCD 308, 443, 538, 652, 724, 987 u.a.

<sup>77</sup> BT (S) gibt für ae. *brycgian* die Bedeutung 'pflastern' an und beruft sich dabei auf die hier zur Diskussion stehende 'Wulfstan'-Homilie (ed. Napier, 239,9). Aus dem Kontext dieser Stelle ist jedoch kein Anhaltspunkt dafür zu gewinnen, daß mit dem in der Homilie erscheinenden Wort *brycg* etwas anderes gemeint sein könnte als 'Brücke' im technischen Sinne. Lediglich wird hier der Brückenbau in Parallele zur Begehbarmachung von Sümpfen gestellt. Die Bedeutung 'Pflastern' für ae. *brycgian* kann mit dieser 'Wulfstan' Homilie somit nicht nahegelegt werden. Umso bedauerlicher ist, daß genau diese Bedeutung als einzige für ae. *brycgian* — offenbar BT (S) folgend — bei WP (II, 207) angeführt ist.

<sup>78</sup> Ein solcher Bezug könnte allenfalls indirekt durch die Vorstellung gegeben sein, daß die Armen in Parallele stehen zu den Seelen von Toten, und also Armenfürsorge auch der Fürsorge für die eigene Seele oder die Seelen verstorbener Verwandter entspricht. Vgl. zuletzt H. Houben, "La realtà sociale medievale nello specchio delle fonti commemorative", *Quaderni medievali* 13 (1982), 82-98 (mit Lit.)

S. außerdem N. Kyll, *Tod, Begräbnisplatz, Totenfeier*. Rheinisches Archiv. 8. Bonn 1972. S. 201-207.

<sup>79</sup> W. H. Stevenson ("Trinoda necessitas", *EHR* 29. 1911, 689 f.) hat die seit Spelman übliche Lesung dieser Bezeichnung als "trinoda necessitas" als korrupt erwiesen. Im folgenden wird abweichend vom Brauch in der älteren Literatur für dieses Rechtsinstitut die sprachliche Form nach Stevenson verwendet.

<sup>80</sup> S. Bonifatii et Lulli Epp. 73. S. W. Stubbs, *The Constitutional History of England*, Bd 1, 5. Aufl. (Oxford 1891), 82; G. W. Greenaway, *Saint Boniface* (London 1955), 66-67; T. Reuter, "Saint Boniface and Europe", ders., Hrsg., *The Greatest Englishman* (Exeter 1980), 71-94. Man konnte sich auf das Gesetz Wihtraeds von Kent berufen, das den Kirchen Immunität zugestand (Wiht. 1), Vgl. W. A. Chaney, "Anglo-Saxon Church Dues", *Church History* 32 (1963), 268. Vgl. auch BCS 178 (Sawyer 92; Urkunde Aethelbalds v. J. 749). S. dazu R. Wenskus, Art "Aethelbald", J. Hoops, *Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde*. 2. Aufl. Bd 1 (Berlin, New York 1973), 88; A. Scharer, *Die angelsächsische Königsurkunde im 7. und 8. Jahrhundert*. Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung. 26. (Wien, Köln, Graz 1982), 188-195; C. R. Hart, "The Kingdom of Mercia", Ann Dornier, ed., *Mercian Studies* (Leicester 1977), 56-59.

<sup>81</sup> Cod. Just. XI, 74, § 4.

<sup>82</sup> Stevenson, Trinoda necessitas (A.79), 689-703, bes. 697-702.

<sup>83</sup> Stevenson, Trinoda necessitas (A.79), 698. Vgl. W. Schlesinger, "Herrschaft und Gefolgschaft in der germanisch-deutschen Verfassungsgeschichte", H. Kämpf, Hrsg., *Herrschaft und Staat im Mittelalter*. (WdF. 2 Darmstadt 1956), 35 ff.

<sup>84</sup> Th. Schieffer, *Wifrid-Bonifatius und die christliche Grundlegung Europas*. Neudr. (Darmstadt 1972), 238-239; R. H. Hodgkin, *A History of the Anglo-Saxons*. 3rd ed. (London 1952), 423; E. John, *Land Tenure in Early England*. 2nd impr. Studies in Early English History 1 (Leicester 1964), 64-79, bes. 78-79; ihm folgend K.-U. Jäschke, *Burgenbau und Landesverteidigung um 900*. Vorträge und Forschungen. Sonderbd 16 (Sigmaringen 1975), 107-111.

<sup>85</sup> F. W. Maitland, *Township and Borough* (Oxford 1898), 27; ders., *Domesday Book and Beyond* (Cambridge 1897), 186-187. Dagegen hat schon J. H. Round ("Burh-bot" and 'Brig-bot'"), ders., *Family Origins and Other Studies*. London 1930, 262-265) geltend gemacht, daß Maitlands These nur für einen Teil der *Midland Counties* (Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire) Gültigkeit besitze. Während Maitland von der Kontinuität der ae. *brycgbōt* ausging, stellte Round die verfassungsgeschichtlichen Neuerungen heraus, die vom normannischen Burgenbau ausgingen, und gelangte zu der Ansicht, das normannische *pontagium* sei von der ae. *brycgbot* zu unterscheiden (s.a. Round, "The Castles of the Conquest", *Archaeologia* 58. 1902, 313-340).

<sup>86</sup> O. Brunner, *Land und Herrschaft*. Nachdr. d. 5. Aufl. (Darmstadt 1981), 258-262; Schlesinger (A.83), 183 ff.

<sup>87</sup> Vgl. Kleinschmidt (A.65), 23-24.

<sup>88</sup> S. die Einwände Rounds (Brig-bot, A.85, 262 ff.) gegen Maitland. Vgl. VCH Cambs. I (London 1967), 114.

<sup>89</sup> Domesday Book Cambs.

<sup>90</sup> ASC s.a. 1097.

<sup>91</sup> *The Battle of Maldon* (A.74), VV. 74-78. Scragg (op.cit., S. 110) hat gegen die Vermutung Gordons, der im Maldongedicht genannte Wulfstan sei identisch mit dem urkundlich belegten Landbesitzer, Bedenken vorgebracht. Diese Bedenken gründen sich jedoch ausschließlich auf die Häufigkeit des Personennamens Wulfstan, sind also pauschaler Natur. Das viel wichtigere Argument, daß poetische

Texte generell in ihren prosopographischen Angaben wenig glaubwürdig sind, bringt Scragg bezeichnenderweise nicht. Die Debatte um die Namenshäufigkeit von 'Wulfstan' wird der quellenkritischen Problematik damit nicht gerecht. Das Zeugnis des Maldongedichts kann diesbezüglich also weder mit Sicherheit zur Bestätigung noch zur Ablehnung der These von der persönlichen Identität der beiden Wulfstane herangezogen werden. Da jedoch beide in Essex nachgewiesen sind, bleibt die Identität nach wie vor möglich.

<sup>92</sup> A. S. Napier, W. H. Stevenson, Hrsg., *The Crawford Collection of Early Charters*. Anecdota Oxoniensia. 7 (Oxford 1895), 123; vgl., Gordon, ed., *The Battle of Maldon* (A.75), 48 Fn. 75.

<sup>93</sup> BCS 1321/1322, von Stevenson (Trinoda necessitas, A.79, 698) ins 11. Jh. datiert. S.a. R. I. Page, *Life in Anglo-saxon England*. Repr. (London, New York 1972), 106.

<sup>94</sup> R. Stewart-Brown, " 'Bridge-Work' at Chester", *EHR* 54 (1939), 83-87, bes. 83-84.

<sup>95</sup> Aethelred: V Atr 26, 1, VI Atr 32,3 (Beide Gesetze gelten als Werke Wulfstans; s. Jost, Wulfstanstudien (A.1), 13-44; K. Sisam, "The Relationship of Aethelred's Codes V and VI", ders., *Studies in the History of Old English Literature*. Oxford 1953, 278-287), *Rect. Sing. Pers.* 1Q, *Gerefa* 13. Knut: II Cn 65, 1 OB. Heinrich I.: Hn 10,1; 13,9; 66,6. S. a. C. P. Wormald, "Aethelred the Lawmaker", D. Hill, Hrsg., *Ethelred the Unready*. B.A.R. Brit. Ser. 59 (Oxford 1978), 69.

<sup>96</sup> C. T. Flower, Hrsg., *Public Works in Medieval England*. Publications of the Selten Society. 32. 40 (London 1919, 1923) Nrn I, II, VI, VIII, IX, X, XII, XIII, XIV, XVIII, XIX, XXIV, XXV, XXVII, XXVIII, XXIX, XXX, XXXI, XXXII, XXXIII, XXXIV, XXXVII, XXXVIII, XXXIX, XL, XLII, XLIII, XLIV, LXVI, LXVII, LXVIII, LXIX, LXX, LXXI, LXXII, LXXIII, LXXVII, LXXX, LXXXI, LXXXIII, LXXXIX, XC, XCI, XCII, XCIII, XCIV, XCV, XCVIII, C, CI, CII, CIV, CV, CVII, CVIII, CXI, CXIII, CXIV, CXV, CXVI, CXIX, CXX, CXXII, CXXV, Bd I, App. I, II; CXXVI, CXXVII, CXXIX, CXXX, CXXXI, CXXXII, CXXXIV, CXXXVII, CXLVII, CXLVIII, CLI, CLII, CLIII, CLIV, CLV, CLXIII, CLXIV, CLXXI, CLXXIV, CLXXV, CLXXVI, CLXXVII, CLXXIX, CLXXX, CLXXXII, CLXXXIII, CLXXXV, CLXXXVII, CLXXXVIII, CLXXXIX, CXC, CXCI, CXCVII, CXCI, CC, CCII, CCIV, CCV, CCVIII, CCXIV, CCXV, CCXVIII, CCXIX, CCXX, CCXXI, CCXVI, CCXXXI, CCXXXIII, CCXXXV, CCXXXVI, Bd II, App. I, II. S. a. Flower, ebd., S. XXIV-XXIX.

<sup>97</sup> Flower (A.96), 204. Da der Bischof obsiegt, wird dem Benutzerprinzip der Vorrang vor dem Erbauerprinzip bei der Schadenregelung eingeräumt. Dies gilt allerdings nur unter der Bedingung, daß es sich um einen öffentlichen Weg handelt, nicht um eine Erschließung nur der Ländereien dessen, der die Brücke gebaut hat (s. Flower, 204-205).

<sup>98</sup> S. oben die Guild of the Holy Cross, Birmingham, eds. Smith, Brentano.

<sup>99</sup> Daß darüber hinaus die Rechte und Pflichten um den Brückenbau verdinglicht werden konnten, verdeutlicht die Tatsache, daß das *pontagium* in der Zeit Edwards I. und Edwards II. als Adelsprivileg verliehen werden konnte (s. Jusserand (A.69), 272).

<sup>100</sup> A. Fitzherbert, *Loffice et auctoryte des Justyces de peas* (1538), XCVI<sup>r</sup>-CXVIII<sup>r</sup> (nach 22 H VIII. c. 5; s.a. *The Grete Abridge ment of all the Statutes of Englande*. 1540. fol. XLV<sup>r</sup>-XLVII): "It is ordayned that 4. Justyces of peas in every shyre, Citie, and Borughe, whereof one be of the Quorum, shall haue power to enquire, here

and determyne in the generall sessions of all maner of annusaunce of bridges broken in the hyghe wayes, and to make proces and paines upon euery presentment against suche as owe to make or amende them, as it shall seme by theyr dyscretyon to be necessarie. And yf it can nat be knowen who shuld make them, then in such case yf they be out of Citie of Towne corporate, they shalbe made by the inhabitants of the shyre, or rydding, within which the sayde brydge shalbe. And yf it be within Citie, or Towne corporate then by the inhabitantes of *that* Citie, or Towne. And if one part be in one shire or Citie, or Towne corporate, or Ryddinge, And the other parte in an other shire, riddinge, Citie, or Towne corporate: then the inhabitants of the shire, Ryddinge, Citie, or Towne corporate shall make and mende such part thereof as shall lye within the lymytes of the Shire, Ridding, Citie, or Towne. And yf it can not be knowen what persons, bodies polytike, or landes shulde be charged to make the sayde bridges, then the four Justices of peas in the same shire, Citie, Towne, or Borughe (whereof one to be of the Quorum) shall haue power within the lymyttes of their commission to cal before them the Constables of euery Towne, and paryshe aswell within lyberties as with out, or els two of the most honest inhabytauntes within euery suche Towne corporate by discretion of the saide Justices and upon the appearance of the sayde Constables, the Justyces of peas, or four of them at the lest (whereof one to be of the Quorum) with the assent of the sayde Constables shal haue power to taxe, and set euery inhabitaunt in any citie, town or parishe, within the lymyttes of their Commission, to such reasonable some of money, as by theyr disrection they shal thinke convenient for reedifyenge and amendment of such brydges.” S. a. W. Lambard, *Eirenarcha*. Or the office of the Justices of Peace. In Two Bookes. Gathered 1579 (London 1581 u.ö.), 352 u.ö. Repr. (Norwood, N. J. 1970) (The English Experience Series. 273.); R. Crompton, *Loffice et lauthoritie de Iustices de peace* (1583). S. dazu: C. A. Beard, *The Office of the Justices of the Peace in England in its Origin and Development*. Columbia University Studies in History, Economics and Public Law. 20,2. (New York 1904), 81-83, 178-179 (Repr. Burt Franklin Research and Source Works Series. 24.); E. P. Cheyney, “The Justices of the Peace”, ders., *A History of England from the Defeat of the Armada to the Death of Elizabeth I*. Vol. 2. (New York 1948), 334-335; Bertha Haven Putnam, *Early Treatises on the Practice of the Justices of the Peace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*. Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History. 7,12. (Oxford 1924); R. v. Gneist, *Geschichte und heutige Gestalt der englischen Communalverfassung*. 2. Aufl. Bd 1 (Berlin 1863), 281-285; G. Schanz, *Englische Handelspolitik gegen Ende des Mittelalters*. Bd 1 (Leipzig 1881), 566-568.

<sup>101</sup> ASC s.a. 1013, 1016. Zur Umdeutung des bislang immer noch überwiegend negativen historiographischen Bildes von Aethelred II. s. S. Keynes, *The Diplomas of King Aethelred* (Cambridge 1979), XI-XVIII, 154 ff.; D. Hill, Hrsg., *Ethelred the Unready. Papers from the Millenary Conference*. B.A.R. Brit. Ser. 59 (Oxford 1978), darin bes. der Beitrag von Pauline A. Stafford (“The Reign of Aethelred II.”, 15-46).

<sup>102</sup> S. dazu Dorothy Whitelock, “Wulfstan at York”, *Francis and Legius*. Medieval and Linguistic Studies in Honor of F. P. Magoun, Jr. (London, New York 1965), 214-231, wieder abgedr. in: Whitelock, *History, Law and Literature in 10th-11th Century England*. Variorum Reprints. Collected Studies Series. 128 (London 1981).

<sup>103</sup> Übersetzung: Si(g)rid baute diese Brücke, Mutter Alriks, Tochter Orms, für Holmger’s Seele, Si(g)röds Vater, ihres Gatten. Text nach E. Brate, E. Wessén, Hrsg., *Södermanlands Runinskrifter*. Sveriges runinskrifter. (Stockholm 1924-36). Nr. 101 mit Tafel 206. S. a. G. F. Black, “Notes of a Sculptures Stone in the Isle of Man”, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 21 (1887), 325-338; S. Lind-

qvist, "Ramsundsbron vid Sigurdsritningen", *Fornvännen* 9 (1914), 290-293: dt. Zusammenfassung u.d.T.: "Die Ramsundsbrücke und die Sigurdritzung".

<sup>104</sup> Übersetzt nach H. Beck, Art. "Brücke", in *Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde*. 2. Aufl., Bd 3 (Berlin 1978), 538: Jarlabanki ließ diese Steine für sich zu Lebzeiten errichten und erbaute die Brücke für sein Seelenheil und besaß allein ganz Täby. Gott helfe seiner Seele. Text nach E. Wessén, S. B. F. Jansson, Hrsg. *Upplands Runinskrifter*. Sveriges Runinskrifter. 9. (Stockholm 1940-58), Nr. 164; vgl. G. Stephens, *The Old-Northern Runic Monuments of Scandinavia and England*. Bd 2 (London 1867-8), 641-642.

<sup>105</sup> Stein von Hogrån (Hauggrån), zitiert nach S. Lindqvist, Hrsg., *Gotlands Bildsteine* 2 (Stockholm 1941), 77. Übers. ebd. nach O. v. Friesen "Sigmund ließ den Stein errichten und den Wegdamm machen zur Erinnerung für seine Brüder: für Sigbjørn — St Michael helfe seiner Seele — für Botraif und Sigräif; (so) auch für Aibjörn, den Vater dieser aller; er wohnte im Dorfe am südlichsten. Gairvid legte die Schlangenwindungen, Nem führte sie aus."

<sup>106</sup> S. Stephens (A.104), 639, 707, 737.

<sup>107</sup> L. Jacobsen, E. Moltke, Hrsg., *Danmarks Runeindskrifter* (København 1941-2), Nrn 229, 238, 269 (mit Beschränkung auf das 'Andenken' an Verstorbene).

<sup>108</sup> S. Beck (A.104), 538-539; vgl. Stephens (A.104), 615, 624, 627 u.ö.

<sup>109</sup> Die Frage, auf welche Richtung der Einfluß festzulegen ist, kann nur vermungsweise mit dem Hinweis beantwortet werden, daß die Häufigkeit des Auftretens dieser Brückenwerksvorstellung in Skandinavien größer ist als in England im 11. Jh. und daher möglicherweise auf vorchristliche Vorstellungen in Skandinavien zurückgeht. Auf den Zusammenhang zwischen Brückenbau und Jenseitsvorstellungen scheint als erster M. Olsen hingewiesen zu haben (Gjøre bro for ens sjæl", *Maal og minne*. 1936, 210-212): "Det at skikken å gjøre bro for en avdødlir så utbredt på forbausende kort tid, synes å forutsette en samstemthet mellem de nyomvendte og kirkens menn som bunner dypt, — på én gang i kirkens og i de hedenske nordboers syn på visse sider av livet efter døden."

<sup>110</sup> P. Dinzelsbacher, "Zur Entstehung von Draumkvæde", *Skandinavistik* 10 (1980), 89-96.

<sup>111</sup> Dinzelsbacher, *Jenseitsbrücke* (A. 5), 95 ff.

<sup>112</sup> ed. Ådel G. Blom, *Norske mellomalderballadar I: Legendeviser* (Oslo 1982), 113, nr. 59. Cf. die ähnlichen Formulierungen in den übrigen Aufzeichnungen 116, nr. 12; 119, nr. 19; 120, nr. 18; 122, nr. 10; 128, nr. 6; 129, nr. 8. Wörtliche Übersetzung: Selig, der in diesem Sein den Armen Schuhe gab, er braucht im anderen Sein keine Angst vor der scharfen Hakenbrücke haben. Zungen reden und antworten wahr beim Jüngsten Gericht.

<sup>113</sup> zitiert nach Moltke Moe, *Samlede Skrifter* III. Instituttet for sammenlignende kulturforskning, serie B IX (Oslo 1927), 333. Seine Folgerung, Draumkvædet sei also in Nordengland entstanden, ist von der Forschung nicht akzeptiert worden. Zuletzt gedruckt bei Geoffrey Grigson (Hg.), *The Faber Book of Popular Verse* (London 1971 u.ö.), 322 f.

<sup>114</sup> Sigurdarkvida III, 42 f., ed. J. Helgason, *Eddadigte*, København 1951/52). Zum Helsko cf. Jacob Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie* (Neudr., Frankfurt/M. 1981), II, 697; III, 249.

<sup>115</sup> S. Houben (A.78), um nur den neuesten Artikel zu nennen.

<sup>116</sup> Erwin Assmann (Hg.), *Godeschalculus und Visio Godeschalci*. Neumünster 1979), 58.

- <sup>117</sup> Cf. G. Gutenbrunner, "Zur Visio Godeschalci", *ZfdA* 72 (1935), 295 f.  
<sup>118</sup> Dinzelbacher, *Jenseitsbrücke* (A.5), 86 ff.  
<sup>119</sup> ed. Assmann (A.116), 64.  
<sup>120</sup> Dinzelbacher, *Jenseitsbrücke* (A.5), 184 ff.  
<sup>121</sup> Cf. z.B. Oswald A. Erich u. Richard Beitzl, *Wörterbuch der deutschen Volkskunde* (Stuttgart <sup>3</sup>1974), 448, 912 f.  
<sup>122</sup> K. Straubergs, "Zur Jenseitstopographie", *Arv* 13 (1957), 56 ff., 69.  
<sup>123</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Schamanismus* (Zürich s.a.[1957]), 362 ff.  
<sup>124</sup> Cf. Dinzelbacher, *Jenseitsbrücke* (A. 5), 26 f., 88 f., 94, 96 ff.  
<sup>125</sup> Kontrafaktur einer Inschrift auf einer Brücke zu Lyon, die Papst Innozenz IV. als Brückenbauer feiert, zit. Dinzelbacher, *Jenseitsbrücke* (A. 5), 183 f., 191. Die Existenz einer eigenen religiösen Bruderschaft, die sich besonders mit der Erhaltung von Brücken befaßte, dürfte kaum ohne den hier geschilderten Vorstellungskomplex zu verstehen sein; cf. *ibid.* 186 ff. u.o.S.

### ABKÜRZUNGSVERZEICHNIS

- ae. altenglisch  
 an. altnordisch  
 ASC *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*.  
 Eds. J. Earle, Ch. Plummer. Oxford  
 1892-9  
 ASE *Anglo-Saxon England*  
 ANSL *Archiv für das Studium der  
 neueren Sprachen (und Litteraturen)*  
 Atr Gesetze Aethelreds II., ed. Lieber-  
 mann Bd 1, 216ff.  
 B.A.R. British Archaeological Reports  
 BCS W. de Gray Birch, ed., *Cartu-  
 larium Saxonum*. London 1885-1899  
 BT J. Bosworth, T. N. Toller, *An  
 Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*. Oxford 1898  
 BT(S) *Supplement to BT* by T. N.  
 Toller Oxford 1921. *Enlarged Addenda  
 and Corrigenda* by A. Campbell.  
 Oxford 1972  
 Cambs. Cambridgeshire  
 Campbell A. Campbell, *Old English  
 Grammar*. Oxford 1959  
 Cn Gesetze Knuts, ed. Liebermann  
 Bd 1, 271ff.  
 DA *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des  
 Mittelalters*  
 EETS OS Early English Text Society.  
 Original Series  
 EHR *English Historical Review*  
 ESt *Englische Studien*  
 FFC Folklore Fellows Communications  
 Geref. ed. Liebermann Bd 1, 453ff.  
 Hn Gesetze Heinrichs I., ed. Lieber-  
 mann Bd 1, 471ff.  
 Holthausen, Ae. etym. WB  
 F. Holthausen, *Altenglisches etymologi-  
 sches Wörterbuch*. Heidelberg <sup>3</sup>1974  
 Holthausen Vgl. u. etym. WB d Awn-  
 ord.  
 F. Holthausen, *Vergleichendes und ety-  
 mologisches Wörterbuch des Altwestnor-  
 dischen ...* Göttingen 1948  
 JEGP *Journal of English and Germanic  
 Studies*  
 KCD J. M. Kemble, ed., *Codex dipoma-  
 ticus aevi Saxonici*. London 1839-1848  
 Liebermann F. Liebermann, ed., *Die  
 Gesetze der Angelsachsen*. Halle 1903-  
 1916  
 Luick K. Luick, *Historische Grammatik  
 der englischen Sprache*. Leipzig 1914-  
 1921. Reg. 1940  
 me. mitttelenglisch  
 MLR *Modern Language Review*  
 Neophil. *Neophilologus*  
 OE Old English  
 OED J. A. H. Murray et al., eds.  
*A New English Dictionary on Historical  
 Principles*. Oxford 1888-1928 Suppl.  
 1933-1982  
 PBB(T) H. Paul's und W. Braune's  
*Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen  
 Sprache und Literatur*. Ausg. Tübingen  
 Rect. Sing. Pers. Rectitudines singu-

- larum personarum, ed. Liebermann  
Bd 1, 444ff.
- RES *Review of English Studies*
- RH *Revue historique*
- RS *Scriptores rerum Britannicarum*  
(Rolls Series)
- Sawyer P. H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon  
Charters. A Hand Book.* London  
1968
- S. E. South English
- VCH *Victoria County History*
- Vries, An. etym. WB J. de Vries,  
*Altnordisches etymologisches Wörter-  
buch.* Leiden <sup>2</sup>1977
- WdF *Wege der Forschung*
- WP A. Walde, J. Pokorny, *Vergleichen-  
des Wörterbuch der indogermanischen  
Sprachen.* Bd 1. Leipzig 1930. Bd 2.  
1926. Bd 3, 1. 1931. Neubearbeitet  
von J. Pokorny u.d.T.: *Indogermani-  
sches etymologisches Wörterbuch.* Bd 1.  
Bern, München 1959
- ZfDA *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum  
und deutsche Literatur*

## BOOK REVIEW

KATZ, Steven T., *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis* - London, Sheldon Press, 1978, pp. 264, £8.95. ISBN 0-85969-116-0

HEIFETZ Harold, (ed.), *Zen and Hasidism* - Wheaton, Ill., U.S.A., The Theosophical Publ. House, 1978, pp. 242, paperback ed. \$5.25. ISBN 0-8356-0512-4

Philosophy of Religion has always exhibited a special interest in mysticism. This may be due to the notion that the mystics' doctrines and/or encounters with the Absolute, the Ground of Being etc. could provide the philosopher with the material he needs, and perhaps even with intimations of the unity of religion (in the singular) behind the confusing and disconcerting fact that there is no such thing as "mysticism" but only the empirical varieties of Muslim mysticism, Jewish mysticism etc. Certainly the philosopher's interests are better served by "mysticism" (often he does not even bother to ask whether the singular is legitimate) than by the disturbing variety of religious mythologies, theologies and rituals. Moreover the question, indeed the paradox, of language is posed here with increased urgency. The mystics claim to have experienced the unspeakable, ineffable, unutterable etc., and yet they are the most garrulous of religious writers. Boswell tells us how somebody tried to defend Jacob Boehme against Samuel Johnson's ill-tempered criticism of his obscure and turgid style by suggesting that Boehme had seen the unutterable. "If Jacob saw the unutterable", retorted Johnson, "he should not have tried to utter it". In an age when faddist interest in mysticism (especially in its more exotic varieties) as well as the view that all mystics are basically saying the same help to inundate the market with publications that had better be ignored, the volume edited by S. T. Katz is a welcome and refreshing contribution. It is a definite advance on earlier work, leaving behind old classics (James, Otto) as well as more recent work which had gained a reputation and influence that it hardly deserved (e.g., Zaehner). Not all the ten chapters are of equal quality, but some of the contributions are first-rate, and the volume as a whole cannot be disregarded by any future study of mysticism. The editor is to be congratulated on his success in imposing a meaningful unity on the volume (in spite of the variety of subjects treated) instead of producing one more collection of essays. Shortage of space unfortunately prohibits a detailed discussion of the contents. One is slightly puzzled by

the fact that the most stimulating and challenging contribution to the subject, Frits Staal's *Exploring Mysticism*, is noted in passing by two of the contributors, but otherwise ignored.

Harold Heifetz is a writer and playwright with an interest in spirituality. His anthology, culled from a variety of authors (some of them scholars, others specimens of interest to the sociology of contemporary fads), wishes to compare two very disparate phenomena because of the alleged similarity of their "essence of joyfulness" and because such similarity might lend support to the theory of an essential sameness at the roots of the major religions of the world. Comparisons between Hasidism and Zen were first made by Buber (but for a very different purpose), and Buber's essay is indeed reproduced, though without any indication of its historical setting. G. Scholem's thorough criticism of Buber and Buber's reply are not reprinted, thus depriving the anthology of any serious methodological reflection as well as of any value it might have had as historical documentation. Instead, a variety of essays viz. excerpts from earlier publications by specialists in Jewish Studies, Hasidism, Chinese Buddhism, Japanese Zen etc. as well as by assorted semi-scholars, dilettantes and poets (representatives of the "new consciousness") are thrown together. Even a few lines from Meister Eckhart are thrown in for good measure, so that he too may rank as one of the "contributors" to the volume. Though certainly not a contribution to scholarship, the volume is not devoid of interest as an expression of the *Zeitgeist* (American version).

RJZW